

# THE ROLES OF ISRAEL'S PROPHETS

DAVID L. PETERSEN





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DAVID L. PETERSEN

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## CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Chapter One	
Introduction: Beyond "Charisma" and "Office"	9
Chapter Two	
Role Theory and the Study of Prophecy	16
A. General Considerations	16
B. Role Enactment	20
C. Ecstasy	25
D. Prophetic Role Enactment	30
E. Conclusions	33
Chapter Three	
Role Labels: Theoretical Considerations, the Role Labels <u>rō'eh</u> and <u>'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm</u>	35
A. Theoretical Considerations	35
B. The Role Label <u>rō'eh</u>	38
C. The Role Label <u>'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm</u>	40
D. The <u>'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm</u> as peripheral prophet	43
Chapter Four	
Two Role Labels-- <u>hōzeh</u> and <u>nābî'</u> -- and One Role	51
A. General Considerations	51
B. The Role Label <u>hōzeh</u>	52
C. The Role Label <u>nābî'</u>	58
D. <u>Hōzeh</u> and <u>nābî'</u> as central morality prophets	63
E. Conclusions	68
Chapter Five	
Role Rationale: Distinguishing between the <u>hōzeh</u> and the <u>nābî'</u>	70
A. Role Label	71
B. Social Context	71
C. Ancient Near Eastern Parallels	75
D. Divine Commission Form	76

E. Conception of Prophetic Function and Constitutive Traditions	79
F. Mode of Divine-Human Communication	85
G. International Orientation	86
H. Role Rationale and Conclusions	87
 Chapter Six	
The Study of Prophetic Roles: Further Issues	89
A. Role Skills	89
B. Role Expectation	93
C. Complex Role Phenomena	95
 Chapter Seven	
Conclusions	98
 Notes to:	
Chapter One	100
Chapter Two	102
Chapter Three	106
Chapter Four	109
Chapter Five	112
Chapter Six	118
 Selected Bibliography	120
Index of Authors	125
Index of Biblical Passages	128

## Preface

This study grows out of my interest in the much studied and yet still perplexing phenomenon we label as Israelite prophecy, an interest which I first explored, in book length form, in Late Israelite Prophecy (1977). The present effort is an attempt to achieve conceptual clarity on a number of issues endemic to the study of prophecy in the monarchic period, and this (i) by using perspectives deriving from role theory, perspectives which have hitherto not been utilized in the discussion of prophetic activity, and (ii) by attempting to link prophetic activity to the two societies in which it took place. I began work on this particular approach during my year as a Fulbright Lecturer at the University of Aarhus, Denmark, a year for which I am immensely grateful both to my Aarhus colleagues and to the Fulbright Commission. I wish to thank the University of Illinois for allowing me to expand my horizons by means of a University Second Discipline Grant as well as for financial assistance in the publication of this manuscript. Thanks are also due to Elizabeth Szachowicz and Naomi Steinberg for their help in manuscript preparation. Finally, I am indebted to S. Dean McBride and W.R. Schoedel for reading and commenting upon this project at several stages in its preparation.

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David L. Petersen



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## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION: BEYOND "CHARISMA" AND "OFFICE"

Scholars have, for a very long time, formulated synthetic statements about Israel's prophets. These ancient poets have been scorned as nonrational enthusiasts or praised as the creators of ethical monotheism. More recently, they have been construed as covenant spokesmen or as cultic officials. Acceptable or not, what all these formulations share is a conception of what a prophet is. Such a conception may be a carefully formulated critical definition or it may simply be an implicit notion. Nevertheless, all those concerned with Israelite prophecy have typically formulated an idea of what a prophet is or is about.

Such formulations, despite their variety, evince a striking commonality in basic analytical vocabulary. The terms "office" and "charisma" recur with impressive regularity as the following article titles demonstrate: "Considerations Regarding the Office and Calling of the Prophet" /1/, "Charisma and Religious Innovation; the Social Location of Israelite Prophecy" /2/, "Gab es im Israel ein prophetisches Amt?" /3/, "Institution und Charisma im Alten Testament" /4/, "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel" /5/, "Office and Vocation in the Old Testament" /6/, "Prophetenamt und Mittleramt" /7/. One receives the impression from this assemblage—which represents widely varying conclusions about the character of Israelite prophecy—that scholars have achieved solid consensus upon the appropriateness of certain analytical categories with which to discuss Israelite prophecy.

The prominence and prevalence of these two categories, however, belies several analytical problems which their use entails. Briefly stated, these difficulties are threefold:

1. Charisma, if Weber's seminal formulations are to remain our guide, represents a kind of authority which is simply not present among Israel's prophets.
2. Office or Amt is a term which has been articulated in two different domains, theological and sociological discourse. Within these two contexts, the concept of office has been used in two quite specific ways. Since Biblical scholars have, traditionally, been influenced by the discourse used in the

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

theological domain, their not infrequent use of this term to describe one or another social role has resulted in some ambiguity. Further, the warrant for using the category of office to describe roles in ancient Israelite society remains to be demonstrated.

3. Use of the terms Amt and charisma as presumed antithetic, analytical categories has introduced confusion into the analysis of Israelite prophecy. Office or Amt is not the natural opposite of charisma, as some scholars have maintained. Weber's own use of the term Amtscharisma suggests the impossibility of an easy dichotomy between office and charisma.

By way of suggesting the inadequacy of the analytical base for much of present discourse about Israelite prophecy, I now broach each of these points in turn. First, the significance of charisma as an analytical category is due almost exclusively to the work of Max Weber, sociologist and sometime Biblical scholar /8/. Weber argued that a prophet is "a purely individual bearer of charisma who by virtue of his mission proclaims a religious doctrine of divine commandment" /9/. Clearly the category of charisma is central for his definition of the prophet, a rubric under which Weber explicitly includes Israel's prophets. Weber has earlier defined charisma in the following way, "The term charisma will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least, specifically exceptional power or qualities" /10/. Had Weber stopped by emphasizing the set-apartness or supernatural quality of the individual, this conception might have been appropriate for some of Israel's prophets, e.g., Elijah. However, he went on to contend that this charisma necessarily expressed itself in the exercise of a particular kind of authority. A charismatic individual naturally attracted followers; he became one type of leader. The presence of a group of followers demonstrated, or better validated, the charisma of the leader. The concept of charisma is for Weber, therefore, inherently relational; its presence requires a response.

Much can be and has been written about Weber's ideal type of the prophet and about his concept of charisma /11/. What is important for this study is the way in which this mode of analysis tallies with the situation of prophecy in ancient Israel. And here there is a problem /12/. Precious little evidence exists which would suggest that Israel's prophets had a charismatic

## One: Beyond "Charisma" and "Office"

quality which led naturally to the formation of a group following. Apart from the bēnē hannēbî'im of the ninth century, and apart from the disciple group which may be inferred from Isaiah 8:16, there is virtually no evidence to justify the claim that the prophets accumulated a following or exercised a leadership role. Dorothy Emmett, a British anthropologist, comments aptly on this problem:

Weber ... connects charismatic authority particularly with the kind of people he calls prophets. But if we are able to follow him and define a prophet as a person who binds his followers into personal allegiance to himself as bearer of some mission or revelation, then we shall surely need some other name for other kinds of inspirational leadership which do not follow this pattern. Moreover, we should have to restrict the notion of prophet to a type of messianic or millenarian preacher or religious revolutionary. This would be to deny it to many of the kinds of people who are generally known as prophets--the Hebrew prophets, for instance--and this would seem unnatural /13/.

One may well argue that the šōpēṭîm were charismatic leaders in Weber's sense of that term /14/. That Israel's prophets were charismatics in the way in which Weber intended that category remains highly questionable /15/.

The concept of office or Amt, as that has an impact on discussion of Israelite prophecy, has been important in two domains, theological and sociological inquiry. As for the former, language of office or Amt became especially prominent at the time of the Reformation /16/. Luther spoke about Amt, the Pfarramt, and the Predigtamt when referring to the function of an individual exercising a vocation in the service of the church. In contrast, all Christians had, he claimed, the same basic "spiritual" call. And he maintained this distinction between "office" and "call" to distinguish his position from the Roman Catholic view of the clergy as a religious order, one class of Christians set apart from other Christians by sacramental action. On the one hand, Luther maintained that office rather than order was the proper way to conceive certain roles enacted in the church. On the other hand, in opposition to the Anabaptists, Luther insisted that certain institutional requirements were necessary for the proper performances of the Predigtamt /17/. No one could teach, preach, or administer

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

the sacraments without an "ordentlich Beruf," which means here the calling by the church through ordination. In not dissimilar fashion, Calvin believed that certain functional offices were constitutive for the institutional church: pastor, teacher, elder, deacon. Language of office, therefore, because of the importance of these formulations and of the debates in which they were used, became an important way in which to speak of roles performed in a religious institution.

More generally, in the post-Reformation period, office or Amt has been used in theological circles to describe roles performed in religious institutions, or to describe roles performed in a "religious" society, i.e., that of ancient Israel. Not surprisingly, Old Testament scholars have (when studying the ancient Israelite society) labelled certain social roles as offices. For example, M. Noth uses the category of office to characterize the role of the priest and the king /18/.

Were the language of Amt or office limited to theological discourse there might be little problem in such usage. However, sociologists also use the language of Amt or office to describe social roles, and in a more restricted way than do their theological colleagues. For example, in classical sociological theory, Weber's articulation of the concept of office or Amt has been of signal importance. And that concept has a very particular nexus. In Economy and Society, Weber distinguished three ideal types of authority: legal, traditional, and charismatic:

- a. Rational or legal authority rests "on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands."
- b. Traditional authority rests "on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them."
- c. Charismatic authority rests "on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normal patterns or order revealed or ordained by him" /19/.

Within the context of these three types of authority, Weber maintained that Amt signified the type of role which a person has within the legal authority system; and this in contrast to the position of the "comrade" or "subject" in the traditional authority system and also to that of the Vertrauensmänner in the charismatic authority system. In the legal authority system, the office or office holder is appointed and functions according to

## One: Beyond "Charisma" and "Office"

the following criteria:

1. They are personally free and subject to authority only with respect to their impersonal official obligations.
2. They are organized in a clearly defined hierarchy of offices.
3. Each office has a clearly defined sphere of competence in the legal sense.
4. The office is filled by a free contractual relationship.
5. Candidates are selected on the basis of technical qualifications.
6. They are remunerated by fixed salaries in money.
7. The office is treated as the sole, or at least primary, occupation of the incumbent.
8. It constitutes a career.
9. The official works entirely separated from ownership of the means of administration and without appropriation of his position.
10. He is subject to strict and systematic discipline and control in the conduct of his office /20/.

It should be clear that this use of the term Amt or office has a more specialized meaning that does its theological counterpart. And if we are interested in using this term to describe social phenomena, i.e., to use the term to describe roles in ancient Israelite society, it would seem wise to follow established sociological usage when using the category of Amt or office.

As an additional point, one might note that it is difficult to claim that this concept of Amt characterizes roles in the archaic society of ancient Israel. Rather, formulations drawn from Weber's category of traditional authority, or a synthesis of the legal and traditional types, might offer formulations which would fit the data ancient Israel presents. Put another way, little warrant exists to think that Israel's prophets held an office.

I am not interested in claiming that the two domains, theology and sociology, have articulated office in ways which are innately irreconcilable. Nor am I interested in claiming that one domain is more important than the other. However, it should be clear that to label a social role as an office, as Noth and others have done, is to enter a realm of inquiry in which sociologists' reflections on the term office ought to affect the discussion. Those who, unlike Noth, view a prophecy as an office, need to be conscious of the precise rooting this concept now has in specific sociological formulations, e.g., legal

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

authority.

Discussions of prophecy which oppose charisma to Amt have produced a misleading picture of the nature of charisma, of office, and of prophecy. Charisma and office have often been construed as essentially bipolar elements. Some have argued that if a person evinces charisma, he or she cannot hold an office, and conversely. Charisma is perceived to be innately anti-institutional. Noth's discussion cited earlier is typical. He delineates the roles of the priest and of the king as offices. And then he turns to prophecy.

... we find in the Old Testament the real charismatic, the prophet. He is personally called and chosen. We generally speak of the vocation of the prophets ... Indeed the phenomenon of Old Testament prophecy cannot be understood in the sense of office. Its basis is an independent divine calling, which cannot be bound to any order of worldly nature /21/.

Such discussions presume that charisma and office are bipolar opposites--if one, then not the other. And yet Weber argued that the typology of authority should include three primary elements: charismatic, traditional, and legal authority. The approach of Noth and others, therefore, represents a conflation of the traditions and the legal authority types. In Noth's defense, I should note that this conflation is not essentially wrong-headed since, in an archaic society, the evolving social collectivities contain features of both traditional and legal types. Nevertheless, an emphasis on polar opposites implies an absolute contrast between charisma and office, a contrast which Weber challenged directly. Weber maintained that charisma could be routinized, that it could be appropriated into the other two forms of authority: into the legal structure as Amtscharisma and into the traditional authority as Gentil- (or lineage) charisma /22/. Hence, to describe prophecy by way of using the term charisma--in opposition to office--is doubly problematic. Charisma does not fit the phenomenon of Israelite prophecy. And further, the presumed polarity between charisma and office is a significant oversimplification of the theoretical statements from which these two categories derive their primary analytical force.

## CONCLUSIONS

Attempts to formulate critical theories of Israelite prophecy

## One: Beyond "Charisma" and "Office"

have regularly depended on the categories of office and charisma to designate essential features of prophetic performance. In this brief examination of these two concepts, I have endeavoured to demonstrate that neither category offers significant leverage in an analysis of Israelite prophecy. The general sense of prophet as charismatic leader which Weber developed does not fit well with what we know about Israel's prophets. Further, the use of office or Amt has created confusion since that term has been articulated differently in the theological and sociological domains. Finally the ploy of posing an opposition between charisma and office, and of maintaining that the prophet does not hold an office, represents an oversimplification of the theoretical formulations from which the categories charisma and office derive their analytical force.

It should be clear that a different set of analytical categories is necessary. What we need is a conceptual apparatus which will allow us to speak about commonality—that which Israel's prophets regularly did—and yet which will allow us to entertain the significant variety apparent in Israelite prophetic performance. Such an apparatus, role theory, is available. Insofar as some previous work on prophetic behavior has used language of office, it has presupposed correctly that prophets performed a role. It is that correct presumption, here articulated in the form of role theory, which will provide the basis for the ensuing discussion.



## Chapter Two ROLE THEORY AND THE STUDY OF PROPHECY

### A. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

"Role, a term borrowed directly from the theater, is a metaphor intended to denote that conduct adheres to certain 'parts' (or positions) rather to the players who read or recite them" /1/. It is, for example, possible to think about a teacher's activities without thinking about a specific teacher. A teacher prepares for class, not because that person had an inherent personality predilection to prepare for class but rather because that person is doing what teachers normally do. Were that person to be released from his or her position, or were that person to retire, we would not expect him or her to prepare for class. Preparing for class is one element which goes to make up the role of teacher.

Just as it is possible to think about a teacher without thinking of a specific teacher, so too it is possible to think about a prophet without thinking of a specific prophet. An Israelite prophet did, among other things, communicate Yahweh's words to various segments of Israelite society. The prophet did this not because he has an inherent personality predilection to speak Yahweh's words but rather because he was doing what prophets regularly do /2/. Were the prophet to cease functioning as a prophet, we would not expect him to communicate Yahweh's words. Communicating Yahweh's words is one element which goes to make up the role of prophet.

Describing the role of the teacher entails much more than enumerating certain activities such as preparing for class. So too the role of the prophet entails much more than topics such as communicating Yahweh's words. There are certain physical and mental skills appropriate to the enactment of both roles. Similarly, there is a range of expectations held for both roles. Parents, students, school boards all hold expectations for the teacher. Yahweh, royal court, priesthood, merchant class, the impoverished all held expectations for the prophet. Role expectations may be ambiguous and they may even conflict. These, and many other, issues comprise role theory, a range of topics which is, simply understood, an extension and exploration of the original dramatic metaphor, role.

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

Studies of role and concomitant theoretical formulations have revealed much about social structure, interaction and dynamics in our society. Some general concepts of role theory have become so familiar that they have found their way into the language of our popular culture, e.g., "he is just playing a role." However, little use has been made of these analytical tools in the study of ancient society /3/. This fact is most probably due to the inherent constraints placed on the scholar of ancient literature and society. The data used by the scholars of contemporary society are not often available to those of ancient society. Unlike the scholar of United States' society in the 1980's, the scholar of historical societies must rely on archaeological, literary and geographical evidence. And the scholar of a noncontemporary society must then judiciously decide which issues the data allow him or her to address.

It is important to recognize that the relative difficulty of using certain sociological and anthropological analytical tools to analyze historical societies has not prevented sociologists and anthropologists from such undertakings. Victor Turner's brilliant essay on the role of Thomas Becket as martyr is an excellent example of anthropological insight directed at "historical" evidence /4/. And Talcott Parsons' assessment of increasing differentiation in historical societies is a prime example of sociological analysis in this regard /5/. So too, specialists in the ancient literatures have successfully utilized sociological and anthropological insights in pursuing their research programs /6/. The issue is not, therefore, whether this sort of analysis can be pursued. The issue is whether it will be pursued well.

Since there are numerous concise and well-written introductions to role theory, it would be redundant for me to expound general issues here /7/. However, before exploring the ways in which role theory illumines a discussion of Israelite prophecy, I will address three basic issues: 1. problems in the definition of role, 2. the nature of theory, and 3. the nature of middle range theory.

1. Despite the general clarity of the metaphor "role," the conceptual elaboration of that metaphor in social scientific literature is not wholly refined. The categories of status and role as these were expounded by R. Linton are seminal to the concept of role. Linton maintained that a status refers to "a collection of rights and duties exercised by individuals who hold that given status ... A role represents the dynamic aspect of

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

status. The individual is socially assigned to a status and occupies it with relation to other statuses. When he puts the rights and duties which constitute the status into effect, he is performing a role. Role and status are quite inseparable ..." /8/.

Not surprisingly, many scholars have found Linton's distinction between status and role difficult to sustain and not a particularly useful analytical tool. Hence various reformulations for role (and status) have been proposed. Dahrendorf, for example, proposes to use the categories: position and role. "Positions merely identify places in fields of reference, roles tell us about how people in given positions relate to people in other positions in the same field" /9/.

Anthropologists, too, have been dissatisfied with Linton's articulation of the basic concepts of role theory. W. Goodenough has raised a critique of established sociological practice and proposed the use of "social identity" as the major analytical category. "A social identity is an aspect of self that makes a difference in how one's rights and duties distribute to specific others" /10/. And R. Keesing, another anthropologist, has further refined Goodenough's approach to status and role by focusing on the reciprocal character of rights and duties. Keesing reintroduces "the term 'role' to denote the operating norms associated with a social identity relationship" /11/. Keesing develops his approach by considering three types of social relations: social identity relationships, status relationships and role relationships. Using these categories, Keesing argues that it is possible to use the term role with greater conceptual precision.

For example, one particular social identity, an old male doctor, will relate differently to a young female nurse than will a young female doctor relate to that same nurse. "Doctor" is not a discrete enough analytical category to allow for the complexity of social interaction in which various doctors engage. Therefore Goodenough focused on smaller units, what he termed "identity relationships." He held that a person's social identity is made up of discrete identity relationships, e.g., young-old, male-female, doctor-nurse, to use the categories from our previous example. Within each one of these identity relationships, one may observe a status-right relationship. Again pursuing the doctor-nurse example, the young typically defers to the old, the female typically defers to the male, the nurse typically defers to the doctor. Hence, though there are three different identity relationships in this social

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

interaction, there is one fundamental status-right relationships. The interaction would obviously be quite different if the status relationships were rearranged, i.e., if a young female doctor interacted with an old male nurse. Such study of role, when this sort of data is available, promises much greater sophistication than earlier studies have proffered.

After noting the positions of Linton, Dahrendorf, Good-enough, and Keesing, it is clear that role--as an analytical concept--has not achieved a unanimously accepted definition and articulation. Despite this fact, however, the central metaphor remains valuable. It has permitted useful research in spite of the lack of agreement about the categories of role and status. The analysis of social roles remains of first order importance for the study of human behavior.

2. Since most of the ensuing discussions will deal with role, a sentence or two on theory is necessary. S. Nadel has defined theory--in the context of sociological theory--"as interconnected propositions which serve to map out the problem area and thus to prepare the ground for its empirical investigation by appropriate methods" /12/. The value of such theory depends on whether it has provided a useful way of viewing the subject under consideration, and whether it provides a fruitful perspective from which to launch further research.

A theoretical formulation functions rather like an electron microscope. Both allow new ways of perceiving reality. A scientist at the Enrico Fermi Institute at the University of Chicago maintained, with reference to just such a microscope, that new ways of seeing allow us to see new things. So too, new theoretical formulations allow us to understand new things. It is my contention, for example, that we may understand ecstasy in quite a new way after setting this type of activity in its proper role theory setting.

3. Sociologically and anthropologically oriented studies are exploding onto the stage of Hebrew Bible studies. The recent works of Gottwald and Carroll may serve as paradigmatic examples of this burgeoning mode of Biblical study /13/. Interestingly, these two studies are quite different. Gottwald's approach is "global," i.e., he attempts to explain an entire social order as well as complex cultural developments by using an all-encompassing theoretical structure. Carroll, on the other hand, uses what Merton has termed "middle range theory" to understand various reinterpretations of prophetic oracles made by prophetic traditionists. To do this, Carroll uses analytical

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

tools drawn from cognitive dissonance theory. Such middle range theory is less aggressive in its scope than is more encompassing structural theory. Merton himself described middle range theory this way: "Such theories of the middle range consists of sets of relatively simple ideas which link together a limited number of facts about the structure and functions of social formations and suggest further observations" /14/.

My own approach in this study follows that described by Merton in that I am utilizing several categories based upon middle range sociological and anthropological theory. Despite the fact that anthropologically and sociologically oriented Biblical studies are becoming increasingly prominent, it would be a serious error to lump them together since the theoretical grounding and the claim of the investigators differ significantly.

Also by the way of introductory comment, one must observe that a number of sociologically and anthropologically oriented studies of Israelite prophecy have recently appeared—those of Carroll, Long, Overholt and Wilson, to name the most obvious ones. This monograph has in common with these other studies the desire to understand Israelite prophecy by using certain insights drawn from other academic disciplines. It is important to say, however, that the just-mentioned authors (and I) have introduced certain analytical categories not because they wanted to be more "scientific." Rather these scholars have discovered certain theoretical formulations or collections of data which their colleagues in other disciplines have conceptualized or gathered and which illumined the issues or texts with which the Biblical scholar is concerned. For Carroll, the crucial interpretive categories come from the social psychological theory of cognitive dissonance. For Long, attention to cross-cultural data informs discussions of the prophetic legend as well as the question of the social setting of such literary genre /15/. Long, too, utilizes sociological theory as a guide to his study of prophetic authority. For Overholt, attention to the Amerindian Ghost Dance movement and to other similar data reveals much about the social reality which the Israelite prophetic process shares /16/. Finally, Wilson has focused on anthropological studies of trance and possession behavior as well as on larger theoretical statements in order to chart the history of Israelite prophecy /17/.

### B. ROLE ENACTMENT

The first subcategory of role theory I will address is role

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

enactment, a phrase which denotes that the object of study is observable conduct in the social setting. Under this rubric, role theorists typically consider the number of roles a person enacts, the intensity with which he or she enacts them—what Sarbin terms the "organismic involvement dimension"—and the pre-emptiveness of roles--the relative amounts of time a person invests in various roles. The Hebrew Bible affords little information about the pre-emptiveness of the prophetic role. There are, to be sure, hints, e.g., Amos 7:15, "Yahweh took me from following the flock and Yahweh said to me: 'Go, prophecy to my people, Israel.'" Presumably the sort of prophetic activity Amos was called to perform prevented him from following the flock; i.e., enactment of the prophetic role precluded the enactment of certain other roles. To what extent the prophetic role preempted occupational behaviour, however, is difficult to know. As for the issue of the number of roles which a prophet might enact, one may classify prophets by using categories such as priest or nonpriest and thereby note that Ezekiel had multiple roles of at least the following: the ascribed roles of male and Judahite and the achieved roles of prophet and priest.

The third issue, the dimension of organismic involvement, is the most important subcategory of role enactment for the study of Israelite prophecy. Role theorists have observed that persons enact roles with varying degrees of effort and bodily involvement. The classic case of a low level of such involvement is the movie ticket seller. Sarbin writes, "The role of ticket seller in a neighborhood cinema during a slow period of business may be regarded as an example of a role enactment with minimal involvement. The performance requires listening to the patron's request for number of tickets, pressing the appropriate button, and, if necessary making change. Interaction is minimal. From self-reports, one could determine that involvement of self is also minimal" /18/. At a higher level of involvement one may note the basketball player enacting his or her role during a game. Proper enactment of the role requires continuous physical and emotional involvement in the game. Different levels of organismic involvement are clearly appropriate to the two adduced roles.

Role analysts have observed that a real spectrum of organismic involvement is represented by various role enactments, and they have, therefore, formulated a scalar description of that spectrum. The following chart depicts that scale in graphic form /19/:

# The Roles of Israel's Prophets

---

## Zero. Noninvolvement

---

### I. Casual role enactment

---

### II. Ritual acting

---

### III. Engrossed acting

---

### IV. Classical hypnotic role taking

---

### V. Histrionic neurosis

---

### VI. Ecstasy

---

### VII. Object of sorcery and witchcraft (sometimes irreversible)

---

Role and self differentiated  
Zero involvement  
Few organic systems  
No effort

---

Role and self undifferentiated  
Maximal involvement  
Entire organism  
Much effort

*Scale representing dimension of organismic involvement.*

Examples best explain the significance and character of each of the categories which make up the chart. (The labels of the categories should not be interpreted literally, i.e., just because someone is understood to be engaged in engrossed acting does not mean that the performance is false or theatrical. The label rather refers to a level of behavioral involvement, not to a subjective evaluation of the enactment.)

1. Noninvolvement. One can be a lapsed member of a political party or church--not registered, not voting, never contributing money. Such "membership" can inform one's self-identity; it results, however, in no social interaction. If such a role occupant becomes politically or religiously active, the level of role enactment will increase. However, without such increased involvement, the role, as described, entails no organismic involvement.

2. Casual Role Enactment. The role of "library-user" when enacted during the routine return of a book to the library exemplifies casual role involvement. Such action is performed at the motoric level in semiautomatic fashion. The level of involvement is so low that the individual can easily fantasize about the enactment of other roles as he or she enacts the

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

primary role casually. For example, the postulated library user can, when returning the book, fantasize about lecturing on the basis of the contents of the book which he or she is returning.

3. Ritual Acting. Here the stage, which provides the basic metaphor of role theory, is particularly informative. It is well-known that some actors have the ability to cry or express violent anger on stage as the part demands without actually feeling the concomitant emotions. Such an ability to act constitutes ritual acting. For an example taken from outside the theater, Sarbin lists the smiles of a waitress. One could also mention the exuberant greeting of an automobile salesperson or the solemn demeanor of funeral personnel as particularly good examples of ritual acting. Such enactment represents a new, and higher, level of involvement since the self is more likely to be involved in the activity than it is in casual role enactment. Furthermore, certain constraints of consistency influence the performance. If further waitress behavior deviates from that expected on the basis of the smile, the initial smile will be perceived as sham and the entire role enactment will be viewed as ineffective.

4. Engrossed Acting. Again drawing on the stage, Sarbin points to the actor who "takes the role literally" /20/. The actor throws him- or herself into the role and yet maintains his or her identity. He or she must maintain that identity in order to work effectively in the role. When one observes a person enacting this role, one may normally observe both motoric and affective components of involvement. Moving outside the theater, we might note as examples: the Old Testament professor who excitedly recites the story of Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal, the football coach who paces the sidelines during a game, the politician who heatedly argues a topic of importance to him- or herself and to his or her constituents. In all these cases, the self is fully involved in the activity. However, the self is fully conscious of the constraints of the situation. If the professor starts preaching, if the football coach attacks an opposing player, if the politician loses his composure, the enactment will be deemed inappropriate. Numerous control mechanisms constrain the ways in which engrossed acting is performed.

5. Classical Hypnotic Role Taking. This category is, for Sarbin, difficult to distinguish decisively from engrossed acting. Both involve relatively high degrees of self-involvement. The characteristic concept here is "as if" behavior. Someone acts



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

totally as if he or she were blind, or as if he or she were eating. The agent, in the example, chews, salivates, wipes his or her mouth with a napkin, and is satisfied when finished--all this without the presence of food.

6. Histrionic Neurosis. Sarbin again notes overlap, and here with categories four and five. However, the length of the level designated by the term histrionic neurosis tends to be longer than in the earlier modes. Also this type of role enactment tends to be less self-limiting. A key concept is organismic involvement without direct physical causation. The case of psychosomatic disease--physical disorder without identifiable pathology--is an obvious example, as is the well-documented tribal couvade.

7. Ecstasy. With ecstasy, a new order of intense behavior is reached. The hallmark of ecstasy is the "suspension of voluntary action." As part of this behavior, there is often distinctive physical activity, e.g., speaking in tongues, an expression of certain typical emotions. Such behavior may end in several different ways. Cessation may come as the result of simple organic necessity, e.g., fatigue takes over, or certain terminative rituals may be invoked.

Sarbin quotes Herskovits, whose description of the variety of typical ecstatic or possession behavior is impressive.

It is an experience framed by the conventions or worship of the individual to whom it comes, and in these terms is never haphazard, but patterned to a degree often unrealized by students. It may come in the solitude of a remote haunt to which a man or woman has gone to receive his god, or may occur during a public ceremony to which his supernatural being has been called. Under states of possession, devotees experience a change in their customary behaviour, even the timbre and pitch of their voices may alter. They may speak "in tongues" or remain silent, prophesy and cure, be acquiescent or recalcitrant. As the spirit, the human being possessed may walk on burning coals, or chew glass, or lash himself with thorny bushes, or otherwise castigate himself without apparent harm /21/.

8. Bewitchment. Bewitchment denotes the level of involvement appropriate to those "who believe themselves to be the objects of sorcery, witchcraft, and magic" /22/. As with ecstasy, such involvement is involuntary. However, unlike

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

ecstasy, there is no more-or-less automatic end to bewitchment experience. To be sure, a recognized counter-charm or expiatory ritual may be performed to destroy the bewitchment. Without such expiation, death is one normal result of bewitchment behavior. Total, unceasing organismic involvement is fatal to the organism.

The foregoing discussion of organismic involvement dimension levels demonstrates that intensity of behavior is a significant variable of role enactment. Some of the examples adduced reveal roles for which one or possibly two levels of involvement is appropriate. The enactment of the basketball player is appropriate at ritual and engrossed acting, or the ticket seller at casual and ritual acting. However, it is very important to observe that some roles may be enacted at several different levels of organismic involvement. For example, the college professor can grade quizzes at the level of casual involvement, lead a seminar as a ritual actor, and give a lecture at the level of engrossed acting. Some roles or statuses can be appropriately enacted at several different levels of intensity. Put another way, some social roles cannot be characterized by one level of organismic involvement.

Such flexibility in the enactment of one role is due to a vast variety of variables--the individual, the social context, the physical setting. It is probably fair to say that the more preemptive the role, the more variety of enactments the role entails. Further, the more complex the set of role relationships, or more precisely stated, the larger the role set, the greater is the likelihood for a variety of enactment intensities to occur /23/.

### C. ECSTASY

The subject of role enactment is especially germane to the study of the role of the prophet. Since Duhm's commentary on Isaiah, many scholars have viewed one level of role enactment, that of ecstasy, as a hallmark of prophetic activity /24/. Hence at this point in our study, an overview of the place of ecstasy in discussions of Israelite prophecy must be undertaken. In the aforementioned volume on Isaiah, Duhm pointed to a peculiar psychological experience, ecstasy, in which the prophet received his message /25/. Gunkel, too, pointed to what he called "the mysterious experiences of the prophets" /26/. Gunkel claimed that the prophets had received their visions in an elevated, almost mystical state, and that they later wrote or

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

spoke their message in a more normal mode of behavior. Building on Duhm's and Gunkel's recognition of ecstasy in Israelite prophecy, Hölscher proposed a much more important place for this phenomenon in prophetic activity /27/. Invoking the psychological and religio-historical research of his own time to define what he meant by ecstasy, Hölscher maintained that ecstasy was typical of Israelite prophecy. Though Israel's prophets transformed the ecstatic mode of behavior which they had inherited from their Canaanite forebears, Hölscher claimed that the mode, ecstasy, was constitutive for Israelite prophetic activity. Of utmost importance in assessing Hölscher's work is to recognize two prominent features of his basic case. He contended that there was a particular cultural connection between Canaan and Israel which led to the development of Israelite prophecy. Ecstatic prophecy was native to the Levant and was taken over by Israel after its settlement in Syria-Palestine. The development of prophecy in Israel was one feature of its acculturation to this new setting. Further, Hölscher contended that ecstatic behavior was part of the prophet's public performance, the mode in which he delivered his message, and was not simply the private source of the prophet's call or message as Duhm and Gunkel had earlier maintained.

Hölscher's work has remained seminal. Some have denied its validity, others have incorporated insights from it. Virtually everyone has referred to it /28/. However, and somewhat surprisingly, it remained until 1962 for two full-scale and influential responses to Hölscher to be formulated. These were the volumes of Johannes Lindblom and Abraham Heschel /29/.

As for the first tome, Lindblom constructed a description of the prophet as an individual "who, because he is conscious of having been specially chosen and called, feels forced to perform actions and proclaim ideas which, in a mental state of intense inspiration or real ecstasy, have been indicated to him in the form of divine revelations" /30/. As this definition demonstrates, Lindblom took pains to develop the categories of inspiration and ecstasy. "Inspiration is the more general term. Inspiration appears as mental excitement and exaltation in general. I prefer to use the term ecstasy when inspiration has grown so strong that the inspired person has lost full control of himself" /31/. Using these categories, Lindblom was able to achieve a rather more nuanced description of intense religious experience than had Hölscher. Further, Lindblom maintained, in

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

contradistinction to Hölscher, that ecstasy was "an accessory and accidental phenomenon in the religious life of the great prophets ...," not an essential feature of their prophetic activity /32/.

These features, however, do not constitute the greatest difference between Lindblom and Hölscher. Rather, as Lindblom himself noted, "After more recent investigations of a religio- historical and psychological nature the ideas presented by Hölscher are hardly tenable. Ecstatic phenomena and movements are not confined to particular races, people or countries; they flourish all over the world ... Ecstasy with its manifestations is a general human phenomenon and based not on peculiarities of races and people but on personal predisposition in individuals" /33/. For Lindblom, inspiration/ecstasy is a religio-historical universal available to all people at all times and is more the result of a personality type than it is a function of cultural or social influence.

While Lindblom's careful work in observing the variety of intense religious experience is commendable, his claim that such behavior is universal, the function of personality, tends to isolate the behavior of a prophet from the society of which he was a part. Such isolation of behavior from its social nexus is unjustified, as a recent and productive study demonstrates. Lewis, in a seminal volume entitled Ecstatic Religion, decries just such theories as Lindblom's as purporting a "steady state theory of mystical productivity" /34/. Such an approach, Lewis argues, divorces "transcendental experience from the social environment in which it occurs ..." The "steady state" theory disallows much valuable evidence about intense religious experience and makes the sort of valuable conclusions which Lewis achieves--on which see below--impossible to achieve. Hence, despite Lindblom's having broadened the base for the investigation of Israelite prophetic behavior, his lack of attention to the social setting of that behavior severely hampers the use of his insight as a research model.

The other thoroughgoing response to that of Hölscher was that of Heschel. Heschel took a tack quite different from that of Lindblom. He denies systematically that Israel's prophets may be construed as ecstasies. He elaborately analyzes the literary prophets and concludes that none of the distinguishing marks of ecstasy, e.g., frenzy, merging with the god, extinction of self, is present in the literature of the classical prophets /35/. Having rejected ecstasy as a category with which to

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

understand Israelite prophecy, Heschel proposes another concept, "the divine pathos." The divine pathos signifies that "God is involved in history, as intimately affected by events in history, as living care" /36/. The prophet is a person who, because of a distinctive consciousness, is able to share in the divine pathos and who is able to communicate that pathos to the human scene. Heschel writes, "The fundamental experience of the prophet is fellowship with the feelings of God, a sympathy with the divine pathos, a communion with the divine consciousness which comes about through the prophet's reflection of, or participation in, the divine pathos" /37/.

By replacing ecstasy with a special prophetic consciousness, Heschel has replaced an ambiguous category with one of little analytical rigor. It is difficult indeed to know how to study either the divine pathos or a prophet's consciousness. Again, as with Lindblom, there is little attention devoted to the social setting of the prophet. Furthermore, it is difficult to deny that there is special pleading in Heschel's case since, for him, Israel's prophets appear sui generis, without significant forerunners, contemporaries or descendants. Any approach which systematically excludes either the Mari prophetic material or the Deir 'Alla Balaam is not sensitive to important ancient Near Eastern evidence which might illumine Israelite prophecy. Heschel's tome, despite its felicitous style and its theological sensitivity, does not offer a sufficiently critical discussion of prophecy so as to allow for further research.

In an attempt to move the discussion of ecstasy forward, R. Wilson noted, as had Lindblom and Clements before him, that ecstasy has often been used to mean two quite different things: "1. the nature of the process of divine-human communication, and 2. the behavioral characteristics arising from that process of communication" /38/. Having said that, Wilson surveys anthropological studies on trance and possession behavior (anthropologists do not often use the term ecstasy). His conclusions from that survey as well as from an analysis of the stem nb are fundamentally fourfold: 1. some of Israel's prophets did evince stereotype possession behavior; 2. such possession behavior was not static, i.e., prophetic performance could vary according to historical period, place, cultural and social context; 3. possession behavior was not always the same. Prophets could deviate from the social norm for such behavior; 4. ecstatic behavior was evaluated differently by various groups inside Israel /39/. And by way of summary comment, Wilson

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

states, "the question of prophecy and ecstasy is far more complex than earlier scholars had supposed" /40/.

One can only second Wilson's just-cited observation and welcome the careful work he has done in surveying the anthropological evidence for possession and trance behavior. Simple appeals to the work of Hölscher, Lindblom, and Heschel are no longer possible. However, one crucial question remains: is trance or possession behavior characteristic or even regularly prominent in Israelite prophetic activity /41/.

Wilson's argumentation, for one, seems to address this question in the following way. He studies the word nb' and hypothesizes that the hithpael originally meant "to act like a prophet" whereas the niphal originally meant "to speak like a prophet." He then surveys the hithpael uses of the root as evidence for prophetic, i.e., possession, behavior /42/. One can only respond to this proposal that to speak like a prophet could be and most likely was often thought to be typical prophetic behavior. Hence, the hithpael uses could mean the same thing as the niphal occurrences. Both conjugations could mean "to speak like a prophet" since such speaking was, incontestably, typical prophetic action. Further, Wilson observes that the meanings of the hithpael and niphal uses of nb' merged at some later point, a fact which makes the case for a distinction between these two conjugations even more difficult to evaluate. In sum, a word study of nb' is unlikely to reveal examples of possession behavior within Israelite prophetic activity.

S. Parker, in another recent study, also treats the aforementioned question: is possession behavior prominent in Israelite prophetic behavior? Using cross-cultural anthropological perspectives, as did Wilson, Parker argues that there is little evidence for identifying possession trance in Israelite prophetic activity. Possession trances are not mediumistic; i.e., there is no communication between a god and a person in possession trances. And without such communication--a hallmark of Israelite prophecy--one can hardly speak of possession trance as a part of the prophet's experience. Further, and more important, Parker maintains that "Yahwistic prophecy in Israel does not involve possession of any kind" /43/. Texts such as Isaiah 31:3-4 and Jeremiah 23:9, texts which are often adduced as evidence for possession behavior, are better explained by appeal to ancient Near Eastern literary convention /44/. There is significant conventionality in the portrayal of reaction to misfortune, e.g., compare Isaiah 13:7-8 with Isaiah 31:3-4.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Further, use of terms like mešuggāʿ is usually polemic, not a neutral description of prophetic behavior (Jeremiah 29:24-27; 2 Kings 9; Hosea 9:7). Parker does suggest that possession trance may be present in Phoenician culture, so 1 Kings 18, but it is not part of the Israelite cultural expectation for its prophets. Parker summarizes his position:

I conclude that possession trance is not an element of Israelite prophecy, and figures in a history of Israelite prophecy only marginally in discussions of i) the possible impact of Phoenician prophecy on Israelite institutions, especially in the Omride court, and ii) the calumny and mockery to which prophets could be subjected /45/.

One may only conclude that if the very presence of ecstatic, or better termed, trance or possession behavior in Israelite prophecy is moot, and Parker's analysis surely suggests that it is, ecstasy can hardly be an essential or even regular feature of Israelite prophetic performance.

The situation with ecstasy is therefore this. Anthropological study of trance and possession behavior allowed us to describe ecstatic behavior in ways much more precise than was possible in earlier studies (Hölscher, Lindblom, Heschel), volumes which have strongly conditioned the discussion of Israelite prophecy today. This new clarity enables us to ask: is trance or possession behavior a hallmark or even a prominent feature of Israelite prophecy? There is strong warrant for answering this question in the negative. Further, it is theoretically possible that only one level of role enactment intensity is characteristic of Israelite prophecy. However, since prophecy is a rather pre-emptive role, and since it entails a fairly complex role set, one should expect, on purely theoretical grounds, that prophecy entails more than one level of organismic involvement.

### D. PROPHETIC ROLE ENACTMENT

Texts which purport to describe the activity of Israel's prophets do, in fact, support the supposition that various intensities of organismic involvement are present in the behavior of Israel's prophets /46/. A survey of the prophetic corpus suggests that prophets could enact their roles in at least four different levels of organismic involvement. The first level of role enactment observable in Israelite prophetic texts is that designated by the term ritual acting. Some of the symbolic actions which Ezekiel is reported as having undertaken could

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

have been performed almost on cue. One may cite Ezekiel 4:1-3:

And you, O son of man, take a brick and lay it before you, and portray upon it a city, even Jerusalem; and put siegeworks against it, and build a siege wall against it, and cast up a mound against it, and plant battering rams against it round about. And take an iron plate, and place it as an iron wall between you and the city, and set your face toward it, and let it be a stage of siege, and press the siege against it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.

Here Yahweh commands Ezekiel to use various materials—an air-dried brick, earth and a griddleplate—to portray Jerusalem under siege /47/. The action of the prophet in manipulating these elements is best construed as ritual acting. The gestures, the modelling of the siegeworks out of earth, required a relatively low level of organismic involvement. No one watching Ezekiel undertaking this sign act would perceive significant involvement of the prophet's self in the action. Since the action is considerably more than semiautomatic, it represents a level higher than casual enactment. And yet, since the affective component important to engrossed acting is absent, the activity entails a level lower than engrossed acting.

More frequent, even typical of much prophetic activity, is the level of behavior labelled engrossed acting. The actions of Nathan (2 Samuel 12), Elijah (1 Kings 21), Elisha (2 Kings 4:8-37), Amos (Amos 7:10-17), and Isaiah (Isaiah 7) may best be understood as engrossed acting. And one may well imagine that many of the prophetic oracles without accompanying narratives would fit this paradigm. Nathan's interchange with David is a good example of engrossed acting (2 Samuel 12). Nathan operates within the strictures of conversation with the king. He does not challenge royal authority. Instead, he lets David trap himself as he responds to the parable which Nathan proffers. The picture is of a prophet maneuvering with consummate strategy, speaking with the deepest possible conviction and affecting not only the personal life of the king but issues of state as well. Clearly, the level of intensity has moved beyond that of ritual acting; with engrossed acting, the ego is fully integrated in the role performance. The prophet is not speaking "as if," i.e., as if he were Yahweh himself; hence the activity may not be classified as classic hypnotic role taking. Further, the prophet's behavior does not involve the loss of voluntary action, thus preventing the action from being termed ecstatic.



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

This level of behavior--engrossed acting--aptly describes much of the behavior we associate with Israel's prophets.

As for classical hypnotic role taking, it is possible to maintain that vision reports constitute the requisite "as if" behavior. A person who behaves "as if" she or he were receiving external ocular stimuli, without receiving externally observable stimuli which are reported in the vision, is involved in this type of behavior. Such behavior is especially prominent in the vision reports which Lindblom labels as "hallucinations," visions in which the perceived world does not correspond to the objects in the external world /48/. Though Lindblom does not wish to apply this category to Israel's classical prophets, it is difficult indeed to claim that either the flying scroll (Zechariah 5:1-4) or the flying basket (Zechariah 5:5-10) correspond easily to the "real" world. Such vision reports exemplify the level of involvement represented by the term classical hypnotic role taking. One need not deny the reality of the prophet's visionary experience to make this point. Rather to classify visionary experience as classical hypnotic role taking is to observe that prophets report visions "as if" they were normal ocular experience, something which, one suspects, the prophets themselves would not claim.

Evidence for the level of organismic involvement termed histrionic neurosis also appears in Hebrew Bible texts depicting prophetic behavior. In a detailed study of the phrase, "the hand of Yahweh," J. Roberts has compared that Hebrew phrase with other similar ancient Near Eastern formulations. He discovered that the phrase uniformly refers to what Labat has called "the disastrous manifestation of the supernatural power" /49/. In both Akkadian and Ugaritic texts, sickness and natural catastrophe are attributed to the presence, and presumably pressure, of the divine hand. Roberts claimed that the same meaning obtains in the Biblical material as well, so Exodus 9:15. The use of this phrase in the prophetic literature represents a specialized usage, a meaning in large part drawn from the prophet's physical response to the divine presence. For the prophet, the presence of the divine may be perceived as illness or pain. So Jeremiah:

I did not sit in the company of merry-makers,  
nor did I rejoice;  
I sat alone, because your hand was upon me,  
for you filled me with indignation.

## Two: Role Theory and Prophecy

Why is my pain unceasing,  
my wound incurable,  
refusing to be healed?  
Will you be to me like a deceitful brook,  
like the waters that fail? (Jeremiah 15:17-18)

Roberts suggests that in contexts such as Jeremiah 15 the expression "the hand of Yahweh" refers to "some kind of ecstatic experience of the prophet" /50/. By way of making that judgment more precise, I suggest the action or state to which "the hand of Yahweh" refers be understood as the level of organismic involvement denoted by the term histrionic neurosis. There are, as Roberts makes clear, physiological symptoms without the expected pathology, a hallmark of the sixth level of organismic involvement. To make this contention is not to question the reality of the perceived illness or pain, but is rather to point to its origin in the prophet's encounter with the deity. The level of behavior labelled histrionic neurosis could be part of Israelite prophetic role enactment.

The ensuing level of organismic involvement, ecstasy, is difficult to discern among Israel's prophets. To be sure, this form of involuntary behavior seems to be present in the activity of the Baal prophets described in 1 Kings 18. However, if Parker's assessment of the Biblical material is correct, and I think it is, then there is little evidence to suggest that involuntary mediumistic behavior was present among Israel's prophets /51/. It is, of course, possible that such behavior occurred; but there is simply no unambiguous evidence for it.

In sum, Israel's prophets seem to enact their roles in at least four different levels of organismic involvement: ritual acting, engrossed acting, classical hypnotic role taking, histrionic neurosis. To speak about one level of organismic involvement as definitive for prophetic role enactment, as many have with ecstasy or possession behavior, is to ignore other important levels of Israelite prophetic role enactment. Further, to focus on ecstasy is especially inappropriate since we have been unable to discern one unambiguous example of that level of organismic involvement. Prophets could be prophets at several levels of organismic involvement.

## E. CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I have attempted to suggest what role theory is about, and secondly, to demonstrate the value of this

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

theoretical perspective in understanding Israelite prophecy. In this latter regard, I have argued that a systematic consideration of prophetic role enactment reveals that ecstatic behavior occurs rarely, if at all, among Israel's prophets. Further, when one recognizes that prophets could enact their roles at a variety of behavioral levels, attempts to delimit one behavioral type, e.g., trance or possession behavior, as characteristic of prophetic activity are impossible to sustain. The application of role theory to a critical problem in the study of Israelite prophecy has therefore produced significant conceptual clarity.

Chapter Three  
ROLE LABELS: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS,  
THE LABELS rō'eh AND 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm

A. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Role labels, e.g., "prophet" or "doctor," do not regularly comprise a separate category in typical socio-psychological discussions of role theory. This is in large part due to the general familiarity that sociologists have with the roles which they study. Because these sociologists regularly analyze roles of their own societies, formal labels such as "doctor" or "nurse" and less formal labels such as "opinion giver," "expert," "clown"--as these latter labels derive from study of small group interaction--are generally familiar.

For the observer of a society or culture other than his or her own, however, the identification of role and its labelling is a vexing task. This sort of problem regularly falls to the anthropologist and is a problem which the Biblical scholar often shares. Hence the work of social anthropologists is likely to be of more value than is the work of social psychologists for the most basic problems of role identification and role labelling /1/.

What do role labels--usually monolexemic--tell us? Of what value is it to know that Gad was referred to as a hōzeh whereas Jeremiah was designated a nābî? These questions may be addressed only after we consider briefly the ways in which role labels actually function. By way of considering this issue, I describe three different ways--although there are surely more--in which the study of a social role is informed by attention to the role label.

First, there are instances in which a role exists and yet in which there is no role label. In the Kwaio culture native to the British Solomon Islands, Keesing observes that there is a label for the role priest, and yet there are no role labels for the important role of the diviner or curer /2/.

Second, there are situations in which role labels exist and yet in which the labels, in and of themselves, reveal little about the social role. In fact, the role labels may actually be misleading when used literally as a guide to the articulation of the role traits or its occupant. For example, local Presbyterian churches in the United States are governed by a session, a group made up

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

of lay people elected to the role of elder. The role label elder, etymologically interpreted, obviously denotes someone of significant age. However, it is not uncommon for a person in her or his twenties or thirties to enact the role of elder in a church. To know the root etymology of elder reveals little about the role or its occupant; the etymology may even be misleading.

Third, there are instances in which roles exist, in which monolexemic role labels are applied to the roles, and in which the role label reveals something significant about the role. Or put another way, not all role labels are essentially misleading. For example, the role label parent is derived from the Latin word, parere, to procreate. To be sure, being a parent means to procreate, to generate offspring--though adoptive parents are an obvious exception. However, as all parents know, enacting the role of parent entails much more than the actual begetting of the child. The role label parent, though informative in a preliminary sort of way, does not go far in describing the crucial role expectations of and demands on a parent.

One may therefore conclude that role labels vary in their significance for the analysis of social roles. There are roles for which there are no monolexemic labels; there are roles for which the labels are misleading and there are roles for which the labels, though not misleading, are not particularly important for the description of the role. Keesing's assessment of the role labels is worth noting: "Linguistic labels do not turn out to be reliable indicators of social identities" /3/.

Keesing's assessment is important for the study of Israelite prophecy since it has not been uncommon for some scholars to initiate a study of prophetic roles, for example the role of the nābî' or the role of the hōzeh, by undertaking an etymology of the role label and then to reach a conclusion not just about the meaning of the terms, but that the nābî' actually was one who acted as "one called" or that the hōzeh actually was one "who saw visions." Accurate though these philological observations may be, the linguistic etymology of the role label has no more explanatory force in describing the actual social role of the prophet in question than does the etymology of elder when applied to the social role and its occupant, perhaps a young female.

How then are we to assess the significance of the prophetic role labels? Such labels are attested in ancient Near Eastern documents as well as in the Hebrew Bible. And since all evidence about the prophetic roles deserves to be discussed, we are

### Three: Role Labels

constrained to consider what these role labels might contribute to a discussion of the roles of Israel's prophets.

As for the Near Eastern materials, study of Old Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian literature reveals that prophets in these cultures and during these two periods were known by a variety of titles /4/. We know that prophets in ancient Mari were designated as āpilu, assinnu, and muhhu, and that some individuals without such titles functioned not dissimilarly from those who held these titles. Precisely what these titles signified is not wholly clear, however. Philological research can uncover their probable meaning: āpilu "one who answers"; muhhu, "ecstatic." However, the translation of the title āpilu does not appear to aid us in understanding the function of that person's role since there is little evidence that the individuals labelled āpilu functioned as respondents. And as we have suggested above, the meaning of a role label is not a particularly good guide to the delineation of the actual role. Huffman's inference that the muhhu "seems to have a lower status than the first two (āpilu and assinnu), in that the person's name is never given" is of more value for a statement about the actual social role than are mere translations of the role label /5/. Equally significant is Wilson's contention that the individuals who bore these titles were peripheral when compared with the bārû diviner /6/.

In the Neo-Assyrian material, we confront a similar variety of prophetic titles: raggintu, šabrû, šelûtû. However, because of the paucity of material, it is difficult indeed to discern important differences in function to which these titles might attest. Interestingly, these prophets seem to have moved from a peripheral to a more central social function. The Neo-Assyrian figures function prominently within the context of the Neo-Assyrian court, especially during the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal /7/. From the perspective of the ancient Near Eastern ambit, prophetic titles point to a variety in role performance, though it is difficult indeed to be precise about the differences to which they refer.

The Hebrew Bible, likewise, presents several different titles for individuals who are viewed as prophets. A few scholars have argued that this variety means nothing; one fundamentally similar form of prophetic activity lies behind the various titles. The majority of scholars, however, contended that originally distinct usages have been conflated in a long and complicated process which has irretrievably blurred the significance of these titles /8/. That the final picture of the titles is not longer

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

pristine should be obvious since the Hebrew Bible represents the conflation of two national traditions and includes numerous editorial efforts--so the classical example in 1 Samuel 9:9, "for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer." Nevertheless, a study of the usage of the titles may yield clues to the roles to which those labels presumably refer. What follows is an attempt to chart the significance of the four major prophetic titles in the Hebrew Bible: rō'eh, 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm, nābî' and hōzeh /9/.

### B. THE ROLE LABEL rō'eh

The noun rō'eh occurs in three literatures: in 1 Samuel 9, in Chronicles and in Isaiah 30, a text which I will discuss below.

1. 1 Samuel 9 is a difficult text. Many scholars now agree that it is a complex redactional product /10/. B. Birch has maintained convincingly that it is composed essentially of two major literary forms: a folk tale which describes Saul's lost asses, his encounter with a seer, and his recovery of the asses; and a call narrative which presents Saul's designation as nāgîd by Samuel--a narrative which, in my judgment, comprises 1 Samuel 9:15-17,21; 10:1,3-4 /11/. Mention of Samuel in the folk tale, 1 Samuel 9:14, is a secondary harmonization.

Both the role labels rō'eh and 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm, appear in the folk tale. And both are used to refer to the anonymous seer. This apparent terminological incongruity is, fortunately, explicable. The label 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is used in 1 Samuel 9:6,7,8,10 whereas rō'eh is used in 1 Samuel 9:9,11,18,19. With the single exception of 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm in verse 10, 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is used before the editorial note in verse 9 whereas all the occurrences of rō'eh occur after that note. It would appear that the explanatory insertion, verse 9, was the pivot point after which it was natural to use rō'eh. Why the original rō'eh was supplanted by 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm in the initial part of the folk tale is unclear. Perhaps an author/editor felt it necessary to begin the story by using a role label with greater general currency--'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm--than the archaic rō'eh.

Having limited our investigation of the term rō'eh to the folk tale in 1 Samuel 9 does not, however, mean an end to attempts to describe the role to which that label refers in this chapter. Several salient observations may be made.

a. The role of the rō'eh is enacted in an urban setting. The rō'eh even seems to have been identified with this particular city (1 Samuel 9:6--"there is a man of God in this city"). We may infer

### Three: Role Labels

that the rō'eh was not an itinerant.

b. The role is enacted at the high place in the city. This fact tells us that the role was not enacted privately, either at a private shrine or in someone's home. The role was enacted publicly.

c. The role entailed a certain amount of esteem: "he is a man that is held in honor" (1 Samuel 9:6). The folk tale attributes this esteem to the accuracy of the seer's prognostications.

d. The activity of the rō'eh required payment; in the case of Saul this was one quarter of a shekel or approximately 0.1 ounce of silver. (For purposes of comparison, one half of a shekel was the normal offering at the time of a census [Exodus 30:13]; and one third of a shekel was the appropriate annual contribution for the maintenance of the postexilic temple cult [Nehemiah 10:3].)

e. Enactment of the rō'eh's role entailed participation in a sacrificial cultus. Such a cultus involved animal slaughter and the communal consumption of food, the latter element no doubt yet another form of payment for the rō'eh's services.

f. The rō'eh was in the business of responding to requests for information. Such activity is consistent with payment of a fee to the rō'eh.

g. The role, or more precisely role label, fell into desuetude at some point in Israel's history. 1 Samuel 9:9 gives unequivocal evidence of this fact. When the term rō'eh lost currency, we do not know.

These observations obviously do not provide a definite statement about the role of the rō'eh if only because the evidence is so limited. However, use of higher critical controls on the Biblical literature, i.e., focus on the folk tale in which the term rō'eh appears, yields a picture of someone labelled rō'eh which is quite different from the picture if one interprets that role on the basis of Samuel's activity in 1 Samuel 9 and elsewhere. The contours of this role are, furthermore, intelligible. He is a type of holy man fully integrated into the major structures of the society /12/. Enactment of the role is tied to one of the urban maintenance structures, the public cultus. Also, the role is limited to the basic systems of economic interchange--grain and silver--as media for payment of a fee. Finally, one role enactment is performed in a setting--the meal--which served as an important context for a variety of public social and cultic functions in ancient Israel.

2. The only other occurrences of rō'eh are in the stereotypic



expressions found in Chronicles: "Samuel the seer" (1 Chronicles 9:22; 26:28; 29:29) and "Hanani the seer" (2 Chronicles 16:7,10). This use of the role label is clearly an attempt at archaism and does not reflect prophetic role enactment of the sixth and fifth centuries, a time when the role label rō'eh is otherwise unattested /13/. The Chronicler most probably depends upon his written sources for this use of the label. And here the source would have been the already discussed 1 Samuel 9.

In sum, the label rō'eh was used in 1 Samuel 9 to designate a distinctive social role. Of course, it is difficult to create a complete description of a role on the basis on one short narrative. Nevertheless, an analysis of the folk tale in 1 Samuel 9 throws considerable light on the role performance of someone called rō'eh. rō'eh functions here as a label for one sort of prophetic role.

### C. THE ROLE LABEL 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm

Texts which contain the role label 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm are considerably more numerous than are those which use the term rō'eh. Unfortunately, much recent work on this material has not been productive since such work has regularly avoided fundamental higher critical issues /14/. For example, Holstein argues that usage of 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is homogeneous throughout the Hebrew Bible, and this in large part because he appears to view the Hebrew Bible as an homogeneous entity. 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is, he maintains, not a prophetic title since Hanan ben Yigdalyahu and David, non-prophets, are so labelled. Rather, it is used to describe men of exceptional worth, men of "honorific quality." Holstein, however, fails to ask: what honorific quality is the title meant to describe? What qualities elicited the application of this title to an individual? And when one asks these questions, one is constrained to place primary emphasis upon the Elijah and Elisha narratives since we have every reason to think that this literature, in which the title 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is so prominent, represents the earliest or at least seminal usages of that title /15/. In opposition to Holstein, and others, I will maintain that an assessment of the title 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is possible only if normal higher critical issues are included in the discussion. In this regard, I will contend that the title 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm occurs in three basic literatures: post-deuteronomistic, deuteronomistic (hereafter dtr.), and prophetic legenda.

1. The latest stratum constitutes post-dtr. uses, occurrences

### Three: Role Labels

of the title which most probably depend upon the dtr. formulations cited below. Included in this latest stratum is one reference to an anonymous individual, an 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm who speaks to king Amaziah concerning military matters (2 Chronicles 25:7-9), a sort of usage present in the dtr. stratum, so 1 Kings 20:28. The remainder of the post-dtr. uses refer to named individuals: Moses (Psalm 90:1; Ezra 3:2; 1 Chronicles 23:14; 2 Chronicles 30:16), David (Nehemiah 12:24,36; 2 Chronicles 8:14) and Shemaiah (2 Chronicles 11:2). Of these instances, only the description of David as 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm has no direct dtr. forerunners. (The reason for the application of this title to David will be presented below.)

2. The next stratum comprises the dtr. literature in the broad sense of that term, i.e., including the dtr. prose in the book of Jeremiah. Here the phrase 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is applied both to anonymous and to named individuals. Named individuals so labelled include Moses (Deuteronomy 33:1; Joshua 14:6), Samuel (1 Samuel 9:6-10), Shemaiah (1 Kings 12:22), and Igdaliah (Jeremiah 35:4). The texts which mention an unnamed 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm are 1 Samuel 2:27; 1 Kings 13:1-31; 20:28. (See below for a discussion of the dtr. usage.)

3. The third stratum--prophetic legenda--includes mention of only two persons as 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm, Elijah and Elisha. Although these legenda are now part of the dtr. history, these narratives most probably achieved their current form, and their usage of the term 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm to describe the respective prophets, prior to their inclusion in the dtr. history /16/.

The narratives which we identify as prophetic legenda describe Elisha and Elijah in varying contexts. However, all of the narratives which describe Elisha as 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm share one essential feature. The title is used only when the prophet exercises sacral power. The phrase 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is used of Elijah only when the narrative in which it occurs focuses on Elijah's extraordinary powers. When so described, he is either a channel for Yahweh's power (1 Kings 17:17-24) or a wonder-worker in his own right (2 Kings 1:9-13). When he undertakes an ethical critique or condemnation of Ahab or Jezebel without accompanying miraculous deeds, he is not termed an 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm. And as for Elisha, in the block of material 2 Kings 4:1-13:19, all of the eleven narratives devoted exclusively to Elisha and his power contain the epithet 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm. Typical in this regard is 2 Kings 4:42-44, a short narrative in which Elisha is portrayed as enabling a limited supply of food to feed a large crowd.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Similarly, in 2 Kings 4:1-7, Elisha is described as providing a magically plentiful jar of oil for a destitute widow. In both of these narratives, and in others like them, Elisha is labelled 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm. However, in a narrative which records Elisha's command to one of the sons of the prophets concerning the anointing of Jehu (2 Kings 9:1ff), and in another story recording Elisha's meeting with Joash (2 Kings 13:14-19), the title is absent. In neither of these narratives was Elisha exercising sacral power.

Hence, one may conclude that, in the narratives about Elijah and Elisha, the title 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is used significantly. It denotes activity of a holy man, one filled with supernatural power. The application of the title is reserved for those instances in which the prophet acts in a preternaturally powerful way. When either Elijah or Elisha acts in less supernatural ways, the role label 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is not used.

Form critical considerations corroborate the thesis that 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is used significantly as a prophetic role label. Rofé has argued that the short narratives which depict Elisha and Elijah share a basic literary form:

The term *legenda* denotes the type of stories which grew up in pious Christian circles around the figures of the saints of the Catholic church, relating their virtuous life, miracles, or martyrdom. The genre is, however, not limited to Christianity. Judaism developed a very similar class of narratives concerned with the activity of its pious men. The best known of them are the Hassidic stories termed šēbāḥîm, to be translated "eulogies." The attitude of veneration proper to *legenda* is clearly found in the prophetic stories of the Books of Kings. Its substance is expressed in the appellation "a holy man of God" (2 Kings 4:9) given to Elisha /17/.

These *legenda* focus on the sacral, the terrifying and often amoral power of the holy man /18/. And it is in just such literature that one should expect a title which emphasizes the sacral character of the actions which the holy man performs—'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm.

It is not difficult to conceive the process by which the term 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm was extended from its original *legenda* context into less discriminate usages when we recognize that it was probably the dtr. redactor who first broadened the usage. From this author/editor's perspective, Moses was the prophet par

### Three: Role Labels

excellence. And Moses, Elijah and Elisha all shared one important element: all were wonder-workers. Moses as magician and Yahweh's agent in causing the plagues, so Exodus 10:7, "this man" (a tradition undoubtedly familiar to the deuteronomist) was as impressive a holy man as was Elisha. Hence, for the deuteronomist to expand the application of 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm to include Moses as holy man (Deuteronomy 33:1; Joshua 14:6), and to others like Moses, i.e., other prophets, was a natural move. After the dtr. expansion of 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm, it was but a short step for the Chronicler to give David, his favorite authority figure, the same rank with which the deuteronomist had dignified Moses. All the other post-dtr. uses are replicas of earlier ones attributable to the deuteronomist.

In sum, we should not allow the extension which 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm underwent to blind us to the particular usage which that phrase had in its original literary context: holy man as depicted in a legend.

#### D. THE 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm AS A PERIPHERAL PROPHET

I will now maintain that study of activity described in the prophetic legenda and attributed to individuals labelled as 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm reveals a discernible social role. To make this case, I must use the analytical categories of I. Lewis as those are expounded in his Ecstatic Religion and transpose them from the data upon which he bases his analysis--both societies which have been the subject of anthropological field studies and historical societies--to the culture of the ancient Near East /19/. The subject of Lewis' investigation was ecstatic or possession behavior. Lewis means by such possession, "states of possession which give the mystic a unique claim to direct experiential knowledge of the divine, speaking with tongues, prophesying, clairvoyance, the transmission of messages from the dead ... " /20/. To be sure, some of the features which Lewis includes under this definition are attested in ancient Israel. Saul's contact with Samuel through the offices of the necromancer at Endor constitutes an excellent example of communication with the spirits of the dead. However, these features are not, as I have already argued, prominent among those viewed as Israel's prophets. Nevertheless, Lewis' analytical categories do remain apt for describing roles enacted at levels of organismic involvement other than ecstasy. Indeed, some of Lewis' own examples can be constructed as "histrionic neurosis," as "classic hypnotic role taking," or even as

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

"engrossed acting." Lewis' analytical categories are directly applicable to the sorts of behavior which we have identified in the Israelite prophetic material.

Lewis has noted that the term "shaman" is widely employed ... to denote a variety of social roles" /21/. I present a similar claim--that "prophet" denotes a variety of social roles. The first such role to be identified was that of someone called rō'eh, an urban prophet who enacted his role within the context of the public sacrificial cultus and who also worked on a fee basis for individuals. A second role is that of the 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm. And this is a role which may be fruitfully analyzed by utilizing Lewis' studies of religious behavior in contexts other than the ancient Near East.

Lewis' use of the term peripheral is nuanced, open to misinterpretation. By peripheral, he does not mean beyond the pale of society, or outside the social structure. Rather, peripheral means of secondary importance when compared with the central institutions of the society, and when compared with the classes of highest status in the society.

Lewis has identified two basic forms of religious behavior which are enacted at relatively high levels of organismic involvement. One of these types he terms peripheral possession, behavior for which one may list five basic characteristics.

1. The first salient feature of peripheral possession is the nature of the social forces which contribute to its rise. These forces are of rather specific sorts. They may derive from the social ecology, e.g., crop failure. Or these pressures may be social or political in origin, e.g., the onerous treatment of an ethnic minority in a society. Further, such forces are regularly internal to the society. Tenets held about a particular group, for example, women, may not necessarily be shared by surrounding societies. Finally, such forces focus on discrete groups in the society, not on the society as a whole. For example, in Christian Ethiopia, zar possession religion includes women, who generally hold a disadvantaged position relative to men, and men of subordinate social status. Both groups suffer discrete social pressure not felt by other groups in the society /22/.

2. Those individuals who engage in peripheral ecstatic religion are regularly oppressed or underprivileged members of the society. Lewis notes that this form of ecstatic behavior is particularly prominent among women who live in societies in which males hold predominant power and prestige. "Such women's possession cults are also thinly disguised protest

### Three: Role Labels

movements directed against the dominant sex" /23/. However, males too, when they belong to a lower class or to an oppressed minority group, may engage in such behavior. One may generally observe, "peripheral possession is regularly used by members of subordinate social categories to press home claims on their superiors" /24/. Peripheral possession is therefore typical for one sector of the society: the oppressed and the disenfranchised.

3. Peripheral possession behavior regularly involves the formation of a group. And, typically, the group has some sort of designated leader, a shaman-like figure. In order to understand the function of the group in this form of religious behavior, one must distinguish between a primary and a secondary phase in the development of peripheral possession. Referring to Taran-tism, as well as to other cults with a predominantly female population, Lewis writes:

In the primary phase, women become ill in the context of domestic strife and their complaints are diagnosed as possession. The secondary phase is inaugurated when possession bouts become chronic, and the afflicted wife is inducted into what may become permanent membership of the possession cult group. Thus what is considered to begin with as an uncontrolled, unsolicited involuntary possession illness readily develops into an increasingly controlled, and voluntary religious experience /25/.

The group functions to provide a context in which the possession experience is accepted and even routinized, or as Lewis puts it, "made chronic." The group is also important since it allows the individual a setting for his or her confrontation with nonperipheral elements in the society. Usually, such groups stand under the leadership of a shaman, an individual who has been nurtured by the group in the development of trance abilities and who has ascended to its leadership.

4. The deities venerated in the peripheral cults are not those of the dominant or central religion in the society. Rather, the gods of the possession cults are themselves peripheral. They may be construed to be spirits or gods of neighboring and enemy tribes, i.e., foreign gods. Or they may be alien spirits who operate outside the boundaries of the high gods' normal range of activity. Or, interestingly, the gods of the peripheral cults may be those of an earlier central religion which has been supplanted by a new faith. Lewis notes that "in the contem-

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

porary Burmese nat-spirit possession cult, which is so popular with women, we see much of what survives today of the old pre-Buddhist religion" /26/. Although the conception of the gods of the possession religions may vary--foreign god, alien spirit, or archaic god--these gods all share an essential feature: they are peripheral to the central gods of society.

5. The gods of the peripheral possession cults are regularly amoral. One way in which possession may manifest itself is in illness. The spirits to whom possession illness is attributed are thought to operate quite without moral sanction:

They strike without rhyme or reason; or at least without any substantial cause which can be referred to social conduct. They are not concerned with man's behavior to man. They have no interest in defending the moral code of the society, and those who succumb to their unwelcome attentions are morally blameless /27/.

Though Lewis does not stress the following point, these gods represent one important component of the holy, its dangerous qualities /28/. Even the so-called high gods are dangerous, especially to the profane or to the uninitiated. The death of Uzzah after touching the ark (2 Samuel 6) is a classical instance of dangerous sacrality mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. So too is the response of the people of Israel to Moses at Sinai, "You speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:19). One might also adduce the death of the Egyptian firstborn as a sign of God's dangerous power (Exodus 11:4-12:36). Some spirits and gods are conceived almost exclusively in these terms, i.e., as expressing little more than dangerous holiness. Peripheral possession spirits are often just such gods.

These five features which serve to characterize what Lewis terms peripheral possession cults may be transposed from his discussion to an analysis of ancient Israelite religion behavior. One may observe that each of the features which Lewis discerns in peripheral cults is in some way present in the prophetic legenda which describes the activity of the holy man and the bēnē hannēbî'im in ancient Israel. For these reasons, one may contend that the Israelite prophetic legenda evince peripheral prophetic activity. This thesis is not meant to deny the obvious channels of communication and other activities which Elisha and Elijah exercise vis-à-vis the royal court, i.e., peripheral activity does not occur outside the bounds of the

### Three: Role Labels

social structure. And to this extent, the ninth century Israelite prophets examined here may not be perfect examples of Lewis' category, peripheral prophecy. Nevertheless, with very few exceptions, the activity of prophets labelled 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm tallies well with the essential characteristics of peripheral prophecy.

1. The presence of certain distinctive social and ecological pressures may be discerned during the historical period in which the 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm and bēnē hannēbî'im were active in Israel. The narratives about Elijah in 1 Kings 17-18 depict a time of severe pressures, especially upon the lower classes in Israelite society. The well-known glory of the Omrides can only have resulted from heavy taxation and land appropriation, so the Naboth vineyard episode (1 Kings 21). Further, the drought mentioned in the Elijah cycle would have had a severe impact upon those engaged in subsistence agriculture. Compounding the economic and ecological pressures were certain cultural developments which apparently put exclusivistic Yahwists under duress, so 1 Kings 18:13. It is precisely such a collocation of factors focused on those of low status--normally the religiously conservative element in the population--which would have fostered the development of peripheral prophecy.

This movement, as some of the Elisha narratives strongly suggest, functioned in several ways. It served to ameliorate some of the ecological pressures which the members faced, so, for example, the consistent emphasis upon the 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm providing food for the group's members. The group also provided structural support for individuals who were peripheral to the dominant sectors--the religiously, economically, and culturally dominant sectors of the society.

2. Those individuals active as 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm in the legenda contexts are depicted as oppressed, or as relating to peripheral members of the society. Elijah is perceived as peripheral to the structures of society. He is forced to leave his nation and to inhabit wastelands in order to save his life (1 Kings 17:3; 19:2). And when he is available in his own land, he appears not in a city but rather "on the top of a hill" (2 Kings 1:9). Such an existence may surely be understood as peripheral to the loci of power and prestige in the society.

The position of Elisha is presented differently. He is depicted less as an outcast and more as a holy man who associates with those of peripheral status. To be sure, he, on occasion, confers with the male population of a city about its water supply (2



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Kings 2:19) and with a king (2 Kings 13:14-19). And yet, most of the people with whom he associates have lower social positions than does he. His contact with women is notable in this regard; when visiting the house of a wealthy couple, he is in conversation with the woman, not the man of the house (2 Kings 4:8-37). And in 2 Kings 4:1-7, Elisha is responsible for the well-being of a widow of one of the bēnē hannēbî'im—the widow is one of the traditional examples of a peripheral status in Israelite society, a status which requires special legal protection. Similarly, Elisha relates to a leprous foreigner who would have been viewed negatively on both social and religious grounds in Israel (2 Kings 5:1-27). Na'aman was marginal to Israelite society and ritually unclean according to Israelite religious ideology.

3. The role enactment of the 'iś (hā)'ēlōhîm entails group activity. This is a particularly important point since the group denoted by the phrase bēnē hannēbî'im is so markedly absent from the periods before and after the ninth century B.C.E. Both Elijah and Elisha were understood to function within the context of a prophetic group. From the perspective of the author of the Elijah narratives, only Elijah, of his group, remained alive. Hence only the Elisha narratives are of help in charting the contours of the group-holy man dynamic. Elisha's function as father or leader of the group does provide insight into the character of this dynamic /29/. The leader was held responsible for the material welfare of the group: he was responsible for food (2 Kings 4:38-41, 42-44), for housing (2 Kings 6:1-7), for health (2 Kings 4:38-41), and for relatives of deceased group members (2 Kings 4:1-7).

To speak of one group of bēnē hannēbî'im is perhaps mistaken since there is textual evidence for thinking that several such groups may have existed. In 2 Kings 2:3 we learn that a group of the sons of the prophets lived in Bethel; in 2 Kings 2:5, we learn of a group in Jericho. Both groups were present in urban contexts. When one couples this observation with the fact that Elisha is an itinerant—one who travels with a helper or only a few individuals—it seems likely that the bēnē hannēbî'im were bands of Yahwists situated in cities. Elisha, a charismatic leader in the full sense of that term, travelled among the groups enacting his prophetic role. As for the members of the bēnē hannēbî'im, one may surmise that they were not of the landed or merchant urban class since they depended ultimately upon their leader and other donors for

### Three: Role Labels

material support. The itinerant Elisha, and whatever individuals travelled with him, also depended upon alms which came from the wealthy and/or their urban supporters.

4. The god of peripheral prophecy in Israel during the ninth century--Yahweh--is himself, radical though this statement might seem, peripheral. During the reign of Ahab, there can be little doubt that veneration of Baal achieved a significant place in the state cultus. Whether or not we accept the vituperations of Judah-sympathetic deuteronomistic history, it seems clear that Yahweh was less central as god than he had been earlier in the northern kingdom. As peripheral god, Yahweh's appeal was, significantly, to peripheral groups in the society. In this regard, it is noteworthy that a Syrian is perceived as venerator of Yahweh. This basic subtype of peripheral god, one who had earlier been central and who has become peripheral, is attested numerous times in Lewis' investigation of peripheral religious behavior.

5. The god of peripheral prophecy is himself amoral. Here the very character of the prophetic legenda is important. They focus not on the goodness but on the power of the 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm. And when Yahweh is invoked by the holy man, he is invoked to perform powerful or miraculous deeds. Elijah's calling down "the fire of God" to destroy Israelite forces (2 Kings 1:12) is a parade example. So too is Elisha's action of cursing and summoning bears to kill children "in the name of Yahweh" (2 Kings 2:23-25). Yahweh is perceived, here, not so much as a moral god, but rather as a powerful god. Such heavy emphasis on the power of Yahweh should not be surprising when one recognizes that Yahweh is peripheral to a god, Baal, who is, perhaps above all else, powerful--"O, Puissant Baal."

In sum, I have argued that the role label 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm, as it is used in the prophetic legenda, points to a distinctive social role. I have used a category--peripheral prophecy--adapted from Lewis' discussion to refer that role. Peripheral prophecy is a collective phenomenon. Usually located in cities, bands of individuals known as the bēnē hannēbî'im associate for certain common activities. For example, concern for food and commensality figure prominently in the literature. The groups appear to depend upon alms and minimal food gathering for their subsistence. As socially and religiously peripheral, they could be persecuted; and here again, they had to depend upon upperclass support for their existence.

The groups were focused around the charismatic leader, a

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

holy man of which Elisha is a typical example. The leader enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the group. They verified his credentials as charismatic leader. Further, such sympathizers, whether rich or poor, provided for his basic welfare. However, he, interestingly, was ultimately responsible for the material well-being of the benê hannebî'im. The leader was an itinerant, travelling between various groups of the sons of the prophets in Judah and in Israel. He is also reported to have travelled to Syria. He, along with the benê hannebî'im, was a peripheral prophet.

### E. CONCLUSIONS

We may conclude the the role labels rö'eh and 'îs (hä)'elöhîm have served as important pointers. As we would expect on purely theoretical grounds, the role labels, in and of themselves, provide little information. However, study of the literature in which these role labels occur reveals that they refer to two quite distinctive roles. The person labelled rö'eh appears as an urban maintenance figure, one also available on an individual fee basis. The 'îs (hä)'elöhîm (and benê hannebî'im), on the other hand, exemplify Lewis' category of peripheral prophecy. Israelite prophecy, therefore, entails variety in role structure. There was more than one type of prophetic role.

## Chapter Four TWO ROLE LABELS--hōzeh AND nābî'—AND ONE ROLE

### A. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the foregoing chapter, we have considered the general importance of role labels: they are, in and of themselves, of little value in determining the character of a particular role. In that same chapter, I studied two of the four prophetic role labels--rō'eh and 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm--and concluded that these role labels have been used to refer to two quite different prophetic roles. The rō'eh is a resident urban prophet, one active in the public sacrificial cultus and one who engages in consultation on a fee basis. These two activities provided material support for the rō'eh. The 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm, and accompanying bēnē hannēbî'im, are best understood using the category peripheral prophecy. The 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm appears to be an itinerant, moving from city to city in Syria-Palestine. The 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm is depicted in the legends as a holy man, a person who manifests the sacral in the secular order. In the urban context, he is related to groups of prophets, the bēnē hannēbî'im. They ascribe to him the status of charismatic leader, a person who is perceived as ultimately responsible for their material welfare. These peripheral prophets appear to be supported by alms and subsistence agriculture rather than by the sort of activity in which the rō'eh is engaged. In sum, the role labels 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm (and attendant bēnē hannēbî'im) and rō'eh are used with reference to two quite different roles.

The situation with the role labels hōzeh and nābî' is much more complex. Hence the examination of these two titles is the subject of this, and the ensuing chapter. It may seem rather presumptuous to devote such a limited number of pages to a consideration of these two roles (and role labels) since so much has been written about the etymologies of these titles and since so many proposals have been proffered about the activities of those who bear these titles. Emblematic of this literature is a recent Habilitationsschrift devoted exclusively to the root hzh and to its significance in Biblical literature. However, the Forschungsbericht contained in this study, as well as the conclusions of the study itself, suggests that little significant gain has been achieved in an attempt to spell out the relative

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

importance and significance of these two prophetic titles. Even Fuhs does not achieve a distinctive formulation about the relation of the titles nābî' and hōzeh:

The substantive participle hzh/hzym (Amos 7:12; Isaiah 30:10; Micah 3:7) is neither an honorific expression, nor a designation of a court prophet, nor simply a synonym for nābî' or a description of a particular function; but rather is a recognition or expression of that particular charisma, that special gift to or blessing of the seer and proclaimer of the divine will which was grounded in the inaugural vision /1/.

To be a hōzeh is to stand in a tradition (Balaam, Amos, Micah, Isaiah) but is not to participate in an institution. Fuhs goes so far as to suggest that the hōzeh is a subgroup of the category nābî'. All hōzîm are nēbî'im but not all nēbî'im are hōzîm /2/. One can only wonder what sort of status these terms have in Fuhs' system. Is either a role label? If not, what do these terms signify? As long as the status of the title nābî' is unclear, as it is in the final analysis in Fuhs' study, no significant distinction can be made between these two prophetic titles and their usage.

It is my contention that progress in this issue--determining the significance of the two role labels hōzeh and nābî'--will result only when the discussion is set within the context of role theory. And the crucial questions here are: do the role labels hōzeh and nābî' refer to separate roles? If not, are they synonymous, without any significant difference in usage?

### B. THE ROLE LABEL hōzeh

In an attempt to answer these questions, I shall first undertake a survey of the ways in which the title hōzeh is used in the Biblical texts and then compare the usage of hōzeh with nābî' in certain prophetic texts. Only after undertaking this survey will it be possible to consider the titles hōzeh and nābî' from the perspective of role theory.

The noun hōzeh occurs in the Chronicler's history, in the deuteronomistic history, and in three prophetic books. In Chronicles, just as was the case with rō'eh, the title hōzeh is used in stereotypic descriptions most often dependent upon earlier Biblical texts. For example, the appellation of Gad as hōzeh in 1 Chronicles 29:29 surely reflects the usage found in 2 Samuel 24:11. In all instances save one, 2 Chronicles 33:18, a

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

text in which the term refers to an anonymous person, the noun refers to some individual, either a Levitical singer, e.g., Asaph (2 Chronicles 29:30), or some other person accorded prophetic status, e.g., Iddo (1 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15) /3/.

More important for our purposes are the occurrences of the term hōzeh in the other two contexts. In the dtr. history, the term hōzeh is used twice. In 2 Kings 17:13, the editor notes that Yahweh warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and by every seer. Interestingly, when this editor mentioned two separate nations, he used two different words for prophet, nābî' and hōzeh /4/. Perhaps this parallelism of prophetic titles exists solely to balance the mention of Judah and Israel. It may well be, however, an instance in which a particular geographic orientation, Judah--hōzeh, Israel--nābî', has been preserved.

More significant is 2 Samuel 24:11, a passage in which the writer describes David's military census and states, "the word of Yahweh came to the nābî' Gad, David's hōzeh" /5/. Gad, a prophet whose relationship to the Davidic court was of obvious importance, was remembered as being a particular sort of prophet, a hōzeh, even though earlier in that same narrative he had been given the more typical--for the dtr. historian--label of nābî'. As Huffmon notes, it is undoubtedly significant that the phrase nēbî' dāwîd does not occur, a fact which would suggest that the term hōzeh signified something different from that which was meant when the term nābî' was used /6/.

The term hōzeh is used in three prophetic books--Amos, Micah, Isaiah--all prophetic books stemming from Judahite prophets. Micah 3:5-8 comprises a judgment oracle plus an addendum /7/:

Thus says Yahweh concerning the nēbî'îm  
who lead my people astray,  
who cry "Peace" when they have something to eat,  
but declare war against him who puts nothing  
into their mouths.

Therefore it shall be night to you, without vision,  
and darkness to you, without divination.

The sun shall go down upon the nēbî'îm,  
and the day shall be black over them;  
the hōzîm shall be disgraced  
and the diviners shall be put to shame;  
they shall all cover their lips,  
for there is no answer from God.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

But as for me, I am filled with power,  
and with justice and might,  
to declare to Jacob his transgression,  
to Israel his sin.

An indictment (Micah 3:5), introduced by the messenger formula, is levelled against the nēbî'îm who mislead Yahweh's people. These prophets have spoken peace to those who pay them and war to those who do not. They have, therefore, manipulated Yahweh's word for their own purposes. Hence a sentence (Micah 3:6-7) must be passed: the nēbî'îm, hōzîm, and the qōsēmîm will be disgraced because they will no longer receive communications—words and visions—from Yahweh. Following the sentence, Micah, in an aside which refers more to the indictment than it does to the sentence, avows that he, unlike the nēbî'îm just mentioned, is filled with power enough to announce to Jacob/Israel its sin. Although the point of this aside is moot, the judgment section of the oracle is clear. Micah inveighs against those prophets who calculate their message to personal advantage. This misuse of Yahweh's word is attributed potentially to all who receive messages from Yahweh, to all who call themselves nābî', hōzeh or qōsēm. We would misunderstand Micah 3:5-8 if we thought he was making a blanket condemnation of all who called themselves prophets or diviners. Such a contention would be inconsistent with the specific indictment which Micah makes in 3:5. He attacks only those prophets and diviners who improperly manipulate Yahweh's word and vision. This attack on improper prophetic activity affords us little leverage on the distinction between the various prophetic titles.

In the book of Isaiah, the noun hōzeh occurs three times: Isaiah 28:15, 29:10 and 30:10. The first of these texts, Isaiah 28:15, is corrupt:

We have made a covenant with death  
and with Sheol we have a hōzeh.

The noun meaning "vision" or "visionary" makes no sense here /8/.

In the second Isaianic text, Isaiah 29:10, the hōzîm are attacked and are placed in the synonymous parallelism with the nēbî'îm:

For Yahweh has poured out upon you  
a spirit of deep sleep

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

and has closed your eyes, the nēbî'im,  
and covered your heads, the hōzîm.

Following many recent commentators, I argue that the words nēbî'im and hōzîm are extrametrical and may therefore be best understood as deuteroprophetic commentary /9/. Some traditionist entered an interpretation of the eyes and heads of the people. They were, he thought, none other than the eyes which receive visions and the ears which receive words, Yahweh's hōzîm and nēbî'im. For this prophetic traditionist, nābî' and hōzeh were to be distinguished only on the basis of the ways in which they received their messages from Yahweh.

In the final Isaianic passage which includes the title hōzeh, Isaiah 30:10, the prophet records errant commands made by the Judahite people. They commanded the rō'im and the hōzîm not to exercise their prophetic functions:

For they are a rebellious people  
lying sons,  
sons who will not hear  
the torah of Yahweh,  
who say to the rō'im, "See not";  
and to the hōzîm, "Prophesy not to us what is right.  
Speak to us smooth things.  
Prophesy illusions." (Isaiah 30:9-10)

When Isaiah so indicts the people for their improper response to certain prophets, he adjudges the hōzîm and rō'im to be appropriate messengers of Yahweh. The people are wrong for opposing their activities.

There is little ground upon which to distinguish rō'im and the hōzîm here. The canons of Hebrew prosody required two parallel--though not necessarily identical--nouns. Since both words used carry the connotation of seeing, the reason for the poet's choices is obvious. Isaiah, so argues Fuhs, probably appropriated the noun rō'eh from the literary heritage of Israel rather than from role labels current in his own time. As evidence for this argument, Fuhs notes that this text is the sole occasion in which the noun rō'eh occurs in a plural form /10/.

Interestingly, the sorts of activity imputed to the hōzeh and rō'eh--proclaiming Yahweh's torah, prophesying that which is right, prophesying hard things and things which are real--are those actions typical of Israel's so-called classical prophets. Isaiah 30:9-10 do not suggest that the hōzeh (and rō'eh) act



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

differently from other prophets. The activity of the hōzeh (and rō'eh) is proper; they undertake work appropriate to all of Yahweh's messengers.

By way of summary comment on the Isaianic texts, of the three occurrences of the prophetic title hōzeh only one (Isaiah 30:10) is attributable to Isaiah of Jerusalem. And interestingly, in this oracle, Isaiah presents a positive view of the hōzeh's activity.

Now to Amos. The term hōzeh appears prominently in the much debated scene of confrontation between Amos and Amaziah (Amos 7:10-17). The verses salient for our discussion commence with Amos 7:12:

And Amaziah said to Amos,  
"O hōzeh, go, flee to the land of Judah,  
eat bread there;  
and prophecy (tinnābē') there;  
but never again prophesy (lehinnābē') at Bethel,  
because it is the king's temple,  
a temple of the kingdom."  
Then Amos answered Amaziah,  
"I am no nābî', nor a ben nābî'  
but I am a herdsman,  
and a dresser of a sycamore trees.  
Yahweh took me from following the flock  
and Yahweh said to me,  
'Go, prophesy (tinnābē') to my people Israel."  
(Amos 7:12-15)

How are we to unpack the seeming ambiguity of prophetic terminology: hinnābē', hōzeh and nābî'? Wolff puts the issue well: "To hinnābē' he (Amos) must comply; a nābî', however, he was not; nevertheless, one could call him a hōzeh" /11/.

We may begin by observing that Amaziah integrally links Amos' status as hōzeh with Judah, "O hōzeh go, flee to the land of Judah." Amaziah seems to be saying, "Go away to the South, you southern prophet, you do not belong here in the North, especially not at the royal shrine of the northern kingdom, since a hōzeh is to be active in Judah." That is to say, Amaziah quite consciously uses hōzeh as a label to depict Amos as an interloper, a prophet from Judah, a prophet of a sort not acceptable in Israel. Given the prominence of this role label in prophetic books of Judahite origin, such an interpretation is all the more probable.

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

If the title hōzeh reflects a distinctive usage, a Judahite focus, what sense does it make for Amaziah and Amos to use the verb hinnābē', rather than a cognate verb taken from the root hzh, to describe Amos' prophetic performance as an hōzeh? To answer this question, one must recognize that the verb nb' need not refer exclusively to the activity of one labelled nābî'. Rather the verb nb' may describe performance deemed prophetic even though the actor is not necessarily a nābî'. An obvious example of such usage is the case of Pashhur, a priest and chief officer in the Jerusalem temple. Pashhur is remembered as having beaten and imprisoned Jeremiah. After Jeremiah's release from prison, he spoke an oracle against Pashhur which concluded with the following verse:

And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house,  
shall go into captivity;  
to Babylon you shall go;  
and there you shall die,  
and there you shall be buried,  
you and all your friends,  
to whom you have prophesied (nibbē'tā) falsely.  
(Jeremiah 20:6)

Given what we know about Pashhur's status in the temple organization and what we know about his actions, it is difficult to conceive Jeremiah labelling him a nābî', or for that matter, a hōzeh, even though he might well have so labelled Hananiah. Nevertheless, what Pashhur has done was described by using the verb nb'. The verb nb', therefore, obviously denotes a range of activity wider than that normally attributed to a nābî' /12/. Hence, there is little difficulty in understanding that Amos, as hōzeh, could be commanded by Yahweh to prophesy (nb') to Israel and that he could be commanded by Amaziah to prophesy (nb') in Judah. It is important to recognize:

1. that both Amaziah and Amos are described as viewing the title hōzeh as appropriate for Amos;
2. that neither Amaziah nor Amos describe Amos as a nābî';
3. that Amos, Amaziah, and Yahweh are depicted as using the term (nb') to describe the prophetic activity of Amos, the hōzeh. Our position is, then, that Amos is indeed properly viewed as a hōzeh, a title which appears to have some connection with Judah. Second the activity of the hōzeh, as well as that of the other individuals, could be described by the term nb'.

Now we are in a position to consider Amos' reply to Amaziah.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Amos' response to Amaziah is ambiguous, but not in the way in which that ambiguity has typically been construed. He may have meant to say one of two things: (i) "I am not a nābî'," i.e., I am indeed a hōzeh as you, Amaziah, recognize. Nevertheless, Yahweh told me to go and prophesy to Israel, or (ii) "I was not a nābî' but am one now." I have become a so-called northern prophet because Yahweh told me to go and prophesy in the North. And in the North, prophets are typically labelled nābî' /12/. Whichever alternative is correct, and I am inclined to accept the first option, there is a distinction between hōzeh and nābî' which both Amaziah and Amos accept. Amos, however, refuses to accept Amaziah's conception of his role as limiting his activity to Judah, and this because Yahweh had commanded Amos to go to Israel /13/.

This survey of the prophetic role label hōzeh in Micah, Isaiah, and Amos reveals that in both Isaiah and Amos, the title hōzeh is used approvingly to refer to the sorts of activity in which both Isaiah and Amos were engaged. In both these cases, it is licit to maintain that the role label hōzeh could be applied to Amos—as did Amaziah explicitly—and to Isaiah—by implication.

### C. THE ROLE LABEL nābî'

Since we have discovered that the title hōzeh has a particular Judahite focus, it is now appropriate to examine the title nābî' as it is used in these same three prophetic books. First, in Micah, the title nābî' occurs three times: Micah 3:5,6,11. The first two occurrences have been treated earlier in this chapter. The third instance occurs in a judgment oracle, Micah 3:9-12, of which the following verses are appropriate here:

Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob  
and rulers of the house of Israel,  
    who abhor justice and pervert all equity,  
    who build Zion with blood  
    and Jerusalem with wrong.  
Its heads give judgment for a bribe,  
    its priests teach for hire,  
    its nēbî'eyhā divine for money;  
yet they lean upon Yahweh and say,  
    "Is not Yahweh in our midst?  
    No evil shall come upon us". (Micah 3:9-11)

The indictment is wide-ranging; it is raised against the ruling elite of Judah for not following the covenant dictates of

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

justice, against Yahweh's agents for performing on a fee basis, and against those who say the wrong thing. Furthermore, it is difficult to imagine that describing prophets, nēbî'im, as diviners was a positive or even neutral statement. According to this oracle, the nēbî'im held a position central to the decision-making process of the nation. What they did and what they said were viewed with radical disfavor by Micah, a Judahite prophet.

In Isaiah, the noun nābî' occurs seven times, three times in the historical appendix, chapters 36-39 (37:2; 38:1; 39:3), material I attribute to the hand of the dtr. historian /14/. In Isaiah I, the noun occurs once in plural form, Isaiah 29:10. I have argued earlier that the words nēbî'im and hōzîm in this text are late, interpretive glosses. The other texts in which the noun nābî' occurs are Isaiah 3:2; 9:14; and 28:7. Isaiah 3:2 is part of an oracle in which a stereotypic list of preeminent social roles is formulated:

For behold, the Lord, Yahweh of hosts,  
is taking away from Jerusalem and from Judah  
stay and staff,  
the whole staff of bread  
and the whole stay of water,  
the mighty man and the soldier,  
the judge and the nābî',  
the captain of fifty,  
and the man of rank,  
the counselor and the skillful magician,  
and the expert in charms. (Isaiah 3:1-3)

The presumption of the oracle is that these roles should and will be removed from Judahite society. In this context, the nābî', though denoting a role of some centrality, does not, at least from Isaiah's perspective, denote a role of unambiguous honor, the more so since the label nābî' is immediately followed in the list by the illicit medium, the diviner.

Isaiah 9:14 sits within the context of a large block of Isaianic material of indeterminate form (Isaiah 9:7-20, a section which refers to the demise of the northern kingdom) /15/. What is clear about 9:14 is that it is an explication of Isaiah 9:13:

So Yahweh cut off from Israel  
head and tail,  
palm branch and reed in one day.  
The elder and honored man is the head,

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

and the prophet who teaches lies is the tail.  
(Isaiah 9:13-14)

I follow Goshen-Gottstein who argues eloquently that Isaiah 9:14 is a pešer-like addition to the primary text, an addition definitely from a period later than that of Isaiah of Jerusalem /16/. Some later prophetic traditionist wanted to explain what "head" and "tail" signified. In formulating his interpretation, the traditionist seems to have used the sort of list of preeminent roles found in Isaiah 3:2-3.

Finally, in a text that is attributable to Isaiah of Jerusalem, Isaiah 28:7, the nābî' is mentioned in the same breath as is the priest:

These also reel and wine,  
and stagger with strong drink;  
the priest and the nābî' reel with strong drink;  
they are confused with wine,  
they stagger with strong drink;  
they err in vision,  
they stumble in giving judgment. (Isaiah 28:7)

Interestingly, when the nābî' is so strongly indicted, he is linked with visionary activity, just as the priest is properly linked to the giving of judgments. This usage is almost the converse of Amos 7:10-17, a situation in which the hōzeh is charged to prophesy--nb'. These two texts, Isaiah 28:7 and Amos 7:10-17, suggest that the role labels hōzeh and nābî' do not refer essentially to distinctive modes of revelation.

In Isaiah, the following picture of role label usage appears.

1. With the exception of the historical appendix, Isaiah is never described as a nābî'. 2. In the two instances in which the title nābî' occurs in a context which might reasonably be attributed to Isaiah of Jerusalem, or to that basic period--Isaiah 3:2 and 28:7--, the nābî' bears a strong negative connotation. 3. Only the prophets known as hōzeh and rō'eh are viewed in a positive light.

This survey of the noun nābî' ends with the book of Amos. The title occurs in two passages: Amos 2:11-12 and 3:7. First, Amos 3:7-8:

Surely Yahweh God does nothing  
without revealing his secret  
to his servants the prophets (hannēbî'îm).  
The lion has roared;

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

who will not fear?  
Yahweh God has spoken;  
who will not prophesy (yinnābē)?

Our interpretation of Amos 3:7 is reasonably straightforward. Amos 3:7 is not integral to Amos' series of rhetorical questions which appear in 3:3-6,8. This verse even interrupts the flow of Amos' argument. Furthermore, Amos 3:7 is not poetry as are the surrounding verses, so BHS. These two observations enable us to claim that Amos 3:7 is secondary to the primary stratum in this oracle /17/. Whether we label 3:7 as a dtr. addition is unimportant here. What is important is to recognize that this plural use of the noun nābî most probably does not reflect the perceptions of Amos or his contemporaries, though of course the more general verb in verse 8, yinnābē, appears to belong to the earliest stage of the Amos tradition. As a matter of fact, the presence of that verb created the possibility for the Stückwort connection with verse 7.

The case with Amos 2:11-12 is more complex:

"And I raised up some of your sons for prophets (linbî'îm),  
and some of your young men for Nazirites,  
Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel,"  
says Yahweh.  
"But you made the Nazirites drink wine,  
and commanded the prophets (linbî'îm)  
saying, 'You shall not prophesy (tinnābē).'"

The theme of these verses--the attempt to prohibit prophets from speaking--is central to the book of Amos, so also 3:8 and 7:16. However, the shift from third person language in verses 6-9 to second person discourse in verses 10-13 immediately raises questions about the integrity of this oracle directed against the northern kingdom. (Amos 2:6-9, 14-16 refer to Israel in the third person, 6-9 in the singular, and 14-16 in the plural.) Wolff, following Schmidt, argues that verses 10-12 are a dtr. insertion into an earlier oracle /18/. Not only is the text not poetic, but the content, from a traditio-historical point of view, is inappropriate for Amos. These arguments carry a certain force.

However, if one feels constrained to argue for the integrity of this unit—Amos 3:6-16—one may take another tack. Amos is indicting Israel, the northern kingdom. If Israel were to be indicted for treating improperly certain classes of Yahwists,

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Nazirites and nēbî'îm, it would make sense for Amos to attack Israelites for reviling nēbî'îm since it was this sort of prophet with which the northerners would most often be associated. Amos' presence as hōzeh and southerner was surely an unwelcome exception to the rule. In sum, the nēbî'îm, in Amos 2:11-12, if these verses belong to the original stratum of the book, refer to northern prophets.

In the scope of a study of this sort, it is impossible to survey all the Hebrew Bible literature which includes the title nābî'. I wish therefore to make only one point apart from the discussion of the prophetic title nābî' in Micah, Amos, and Isaiah. The title nābî' is used favorably in the book of Hosea, the only book which derives from an Israelite prophet. I wish to emphasize that, with the exception of wekāšal gam nābî' in Hosea 4:5, a text which Wolff and others regard as a late addition, all other Hoseanic texts speak positively of the nābî''s activity /19/.

(Hosea 6:5)

Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets (bannēbî'îm).  
I have slain them by the words of my mouth  
and my judgment goes forth as the light.

(Hosea 9:7-8)

The days of punishment have come,  
the days of recompense have come;  
Israel cries /20/:  
"The prophet (hannābî') is a fool,  
the man of the spirit is mad."  
Because great is your iniquity,  
great (your) hatred.  
A prophet (nābî') is the watchman of Ephraim,  
the people of my God,  
yet a fowler's snare is on all his ways,  
and hatred in the house of his God.

(Hosea 12:11)

I spoke to the prophets (hannēbî'îm);  
it was I who multiplied visions,  
and through the prophets (hannēbî'îm)  
gave parables.

(Hosea 12:14)

By a prophet (ōbēnābî') Yahweh brought Israel  
up from Egypt,  
and by a prophet (ōbēnābî') he was preserved.

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

Among the prophetic books, this consistently positive view of the nābî' and his activity is unique to Hosea, the only classical prophet native to the northern kingdom.

At this point in the analysis of these titles, a thesis emerges. Hōzeh may be understood as a title used of or about Judahite prophets. It is used of Gad and Amos and it is used to describe favorably Judahite prophetic activity in the book of Isaiah. The label nābî', on the other hand, is not used to describe Amos, Micah or Isaiah--except in the historical appendix. The activity attributed to the nābî' in Isaiah I and in the book of Micah is evaluated negatively. Further, the term nābî' is used (probably) to refer to Israelite, i.e., northern kingdom prophets, in Amos. The noun nābî' is used with consistent approbation only in the book of Hosea, the only writing prophet from the northern kingdom. These observations strongly suggest a fundamental geopolitical orientation for the usage of these two prophetic titles: nābî' is appropriate to Israel and hōzeh is appropriate to Judah /21/.

This geopolitical orientation in usage provides an answer to one of the two basic questions which I raised earlier: are the titles hōzeh and nābî' used synonymously, without any distinction in usage? The answer is clearly no; the titles are not used synonymously. They reflect a perception of prophetic activity which is based on national--Israelite and Judahite--orientation.

Given the particular orientation in the use of these two prophetic titles which we have discovered, a survey of prophetic literature which was written after the defeat of the northern kingdom in 721 would obviously be inappropriate. It would be inappropriate since we would expect a progressive melding of northern and southern traditions and terminology after the destruction of the northern society. To search for those earlier distinctions in pure form in the post-721 literature would be to search in vain. Furthermore, after the defeat of the northern kingdom, the title nābî' achieved such prominence in the normalized Israelite/Judahite tradition that in the late monarchic literature, especially in the dtr. history, the title nābî' became the generic term for prophet /22/.

#### D. Hōzeh AND nābî' AS CENTRAL MORALITY PROPHETS

Having answered one of the two questions with which I began this chapter, it is now appropriate to consider the remaining issue: do these two prophetic titles refer to two different roles?



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

The answer here is again negative. I will maintain that these two titles reflect one basic role, a role which has been labelled differently in the respective societies in which it has been enacted. Each society has tended to conceive this role in its own distinctive way /23/. What then is this one fundamental role?

Not accidentally, I refer again to Lewis' study of ecstatic behavior for assistance in conceptualizing the character of prophetic roles. Lewis discerned two basic modes of possession behavior: peripheral possession and central morality possession. I have already argued that certain activity attributed to the 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm and the bēnē hannēbî'îm may be construed as peripheral prophecy. I will now contend that the one fundamental role to which the titles hōzeh and nābî' refer may be understood by adapting Lewis' discussion of central morality possession.

The phenomenon of central morality prophecy is best described by contrasting its essential features with those of peripheral prophecy:

1. One essential feature distinguishing central morality from peripheral prophecy is the sort of pressures which foster the development of these respective behaviors. Whereas internal pressures on a particular segment of the population help create a context ripe for peripheral prophecy, those pressures which generate the context for central morality prophecy are regularly external to the society and are felt by the society as a whole. As with peripheral prophecy, however, the pressures may be ecological—as they are with the Arctic Tungus populations—or they may be political and economic—as they are with the Ethiopian Macha Galla /24/.

2. Those individuals who function as central morality prophets are integrally related to the important institutions of their society. These persons regularly legitimate or sanction public morality. In the just-mentioned Ethiopian Macha Galla religion, the central prophet exercises a distinct political and legal function /25/. Similarly, among the Korekore Shona tribes, the shaman is thought to deal "with the moral order and with the relations of man to the earth":

Natural disasters such as drought or famine are believed to be caused by the anger of the spirit "owners of the earth" who must be approached and appeased through their shamans. These misfortunes are interpreted as

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

the consequences of breaches of the moral order, so that the spirits communicating through their chosen mediums act as censors of the society /26/.

In response to natural or political calamity, "the possessed shaman exhorts the people of his neighbourhood to shun such evils as incest, adultery, sorcery, and homicide, and emphasizes the value of harmony in social relations" /27/. Such concerns comprise the central values of the social order.

3. In peripheral religion, possession activity is widespread; it is available to numerous disaffected members of the society. "In central morality religions, however, inspirational possession has a much more limited currency" /28/. In virtually all of the examples which Lewis cites, one may speak of a central morality prophet, or, at most, several in a given society. Central morality prophecy is not essentially a group phenomenon. Typical in this regard are the Evenk Tungus, each clan of which had only one shaman /29/.

The reasons for this lack of group activity, and thereby, the prominence of the individual in central morality prophecy, are not easy to specify. The issue, however, is linked to the apparent prestige and power which such a prophet exercises. Since the power and prestige of the central morality prophet are considerable, the society could not afford to have numerous claimants to such a role. To have numerous claimants would entail the dilution of the power of that prophet, one who claims to have singular authority to speak on behalf of the god and his moral universe.

4. Whereas the deities of peripheral possession are peripheral, either of foreign origin or gods in decline, the gods of central morality prophecy are the gods who sanction directly the public morality of the society. They are the gods who are responsible for enforcing and safeguarding the social order. They are powerful and, therefore, able to punish violators of the society's norms. Since the public morality articulated by the central prophet is consonant with the values of the society as a whole, the gods are, properly understood, central to the social order—just as are their spokesmen, the central morality prophets.

5. Finally, and directly related to the fourth characteristic, the gods of central possession are moral or moralistic deities. Lewis observes:

However partial or complete their moral significance, it

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

is nevertheless virtually an article of faith that the spirits concerned here are essentially moralistic, and consequently predictable in their administration of affliction. Unlike peripheral spirits, they do not strike capriciously or haphazardly. Acting either directly as causes of suffering, or indirectly by withdrawing their normal benevolent protection, they ensure that evil deeds do not go unpunished. Their intervention as agents of justice in human affairs is thus pointed, but anticipated, and entirely justified. The moral character which those who believe in them ascribe to these spirits is, consequently, just as consistent with their actual social role as is the case with amoral spirits in peripheral cults /30/.

Central morality possession is intense religious behavior of a sort qualitatively different from that which Lewis has described as peripheral possession.

Just as we were able to appropriate Lewis' characterization of peripheral prophecy so as to understand more fully activity described in the narratives involving Elijah and Elisha, so it is possible to discern the phenomenon of central morality prophecy in the activity of Israel's prophets known as hōzeh and nābî'.

1. The first feature of central, morality religion discernible in the Israelite ambit is that of pressures external to the society and felt by the society as a whole. Such pressures were, in fact, coextensive with the phenomenon which we describe as classical prophecy in Israel. Amos, the first of the so-called classical prophets, was active just at the time when the Neo-Assyrian empire was emerging from a period of protracted weakness. The ferment in Mesopotamia ended with the accession of Tiglath-Pileser III in 744. And from the middle of the eighth century B.C.E. until the fall of Jerusalem in 587, Israel (until 721) and Judah were confronted not only by empires (Egyptian, Neo-Assyrian, and Neo-Babylonian) at their doorsteps, but also by severe threats from the smaller Syro-Palestinian states. This situation constituted a crisis from which no sector of Israelite society was immune. King, priest, merchant, farmer, prophet—all were affected by the imperial aspirations of Israel's neighbors /31/. These circumstances tally well with the contexts in which central morality prophecy has appeared in other cultural contexts.

2. The central morality prophet regularly legitimates or

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

sanctions public morality. Perhaps no analytical category used to describe central morality religion is more germane to Israel's classical prophets than is this one. Israel's prophets, just as do the Korekore Shona shamans, exegete ecological realia from the perspective of the divinity's will. Haggai is able to explain crop failure (Haggai 1:2-6; 2:16-17) as the result of Yahweh's displeasure at Judahites for having built houses for themselves and not having immediately rebuilt the Jerusalem temple (see also Amos 4:6-10). Among Israel's prophets, there is a consistent emphasis on admonitions to live consonantly with the divinely sanctioned moral order (so Amos, 5:14 "Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate"). Israel's prophets, like other central morality religionists, engage regularly in such admonition on moral issues.

Further, these issues are perceived as public and central to the society. The well-being of the social order depends upon adherence to these principles. The ethic is neither private nor insular as it sometimes appears to be in certain of the Elijah and Elisha narratives--so 1 Kings 21:19, Elijah's response to Ahab after Naboth's death. Hence, violation of the ethical norms promulgated by central morality prophets can result in social calamity as well as death of an individual miscreant. Isaiah 3:1-5 presents a graphic depiction of the breakdown of the Judahite social order which might result from violation of the central moral order. The morality proclaimed by the classical prophets is central to the entire society.

3. Central morality prophecy is activity limited to a few individuals in a society and not open to a large group. Israel's classical prophets appear regularly as solitary enactors of that role. There is little indication of collective activity. To be sure, there is some mention of "disciples" (limmudâ) in Isaiah 8:16. However, they appear to function as does Baruch, Jeremiah's amanuensis, not like the earlier mentioned bēnê hannēbî'im.

On the basis of the information which we possess, we may conclude that there was rarely more than one classical prophet active in one place at one time. The very character of the authority exercised by Israelite (and other classical morality) prophets--speaking directly on behalf of Yahweh--made it difficult indeed for competing claimants to function in one social nexus. And on the rare occasions in which two central morality prophets are described as active at the same time and place, conflict is an almost natural result (so the parade example of the conflict between Jeremiah and Hananiah in

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Jeremiah 28) /32/.

4. It requires little ingenuity to maintain that Judah's prophets perceived their god to be central to their society. And, despite the fact of occasional syncretistic apostasy in Israel, Yahweh remained, with the exception of periods such as the reign of the Omrides, the major god of Israel. He was not of foreign origin and he had not been superseded by a newer, more popular god. Further, Yahweh was understood to enforce obedience to the moral order of the society. He would act against any who violated the convenantal dicta, so Micah 1:5a, "All this is for the transgression of Jacob, and for the sins of the house of Israel."

5. The god of central prophecy is predictable and moral. In this regard, the regularity of Yahweh's response to evil is a hallmark of the prophet's discourse. If someone violates the moral order, then he or she may automatically expect punishment since Yahweh has promised a curse to those who break the covenant's statutes. These regularities enable the following sorts of central morality prophetic predictions:

Therefore because you trample upon the poor  
and take from him exactions of wheat,  
you have built houses of hewn stone,  
but you shall not dwell in them;  
you have planted pleasant vineyards,  
but you shall not drink their wine. (Amos 5:11)

For Israel, these sorts of divine responses are expected, even predictable. They are predictable because Yahweh is a deity of distinct moral capacity; so continuing with Amos 5:12, "For I know how many are your transgressions, and how great are your sins."

We may summarize that the activities of the hōzeh and the nābî, though reflecting different geopolitical perspectives, are of one basic type--central morality prophecy. Individuals so labelled enact their role in response to generally felt crises. Enacting their role as individuals apart from a group context, such prophets regularly speak on behalf of values central to the society and on behalf of the god who sanctions the moral structure of the society.

### E. CONCLUSIONS

We may conclude this section of the study by noting that the activity of Israel's prophets, whether known as hōzeh or nābî,

#### Four: Two Role Labels and One Role

may be understood as central morality prophecy. Such a role stands distinct from the two other roles we have discussed, that of the rō'eh and that of the peripheral prophet. It is, therefore, proper to maintain that there is significant variety in the role structure of Israelite prophecy. Further, we have discovered that there is no one-to-one correspondence between role and role label. Both 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm and bēnē hannēbî'im function within the context of the role of peripheral prophecy. And both the labels hōzeh and nābî' are used to refer to one essential role, that of the central morality prophet.

Chapter Five  
 ROLE RATIONALE:  
 DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE hōzeh AND THE nābî'

The business of exploring the significance of the role labels hōzeh and nābî', begun in the last chapter, has not yet been completed. I have argued that both role labels refer to one essential role, a phenomenon which may be termed central morality prophecy. Nevertheless, I have maintained that these role labels are not synonymous. Hōzeh is used regularly to describe Judahite prophets whereas nābî', prior to 721 B.C.E., is prominent on the northern or Israelite scene. In both societies, central morality prophets were active and yet they were known by two different names or role labels. Why? This question provides the raison d'être for this chapter.

Succinctly put, it is my position that Judah and Israel were distinctive social units, so much so that when the activity of central morality prophets was described and legitimated, these legitimations proceeded in different way. The two role labels represent important differences in which quite similar behavior was conceived and legitimated in these two societies. In spite of dtr. and other levelling of all prophets as nēbî'îm, and in spite of the falling into desuetude of the term hōzeh (and rō'eh), we may distinguish two different conceptions of the central morality prophet's role /1/. The following chart and commentary depict graphically the crucial features which distinguish these two conceptions of prophetic activity /2/.

A.Role Label	<u>hōzeh</u>	<u>nābî'</u>
B.Social Context	Judah	Israel
C.Ancient Near Eastern Parallels	<u>hōzeh</u> known elsewhere	<u>nābî'</u> unattested outside Judah and Israel
D.Divine Commission Form	present in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, (Amos)	missing in Hosea
E.Conception of Prophetic Func-	herald, the divine council, Judahite	covenant spokesman Mosaic-

## Five: Role Rationale

tion and Consti- tutive Traditions	theopolitics, the Davidic covenant	Sinaitic covenant traditions
F.Mode of Divine Human Commun- ication	both vision and word are prominent	word predominates
G.International Orientation: oracles against the nations	present in Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah Ezekiel	absent from Hosea

### A. ROLE LABEL

a) nābî'. Most scholars accept a connection between BH nb' and Akkadian nabû, "to name, call" /3/. Jeremias' defense for the passive meaning of nābî', "one called", is convincing /4/. He argues: 1. the kātîb pattern is used frequently as a role label, "one designated as ...," so 'āsîr, māšîah, nāgîd, nāzîr, nāsî', pāqîd, (cf. Joûon 88.E.b., and GK 84 a 1, who, in particular, notes the passive sense. One should recognize, however, that the kātîb pattern may have, though infrequently, an active meaning in BH.) 2. Akkadian nabûm/nabûm as "one called" is used in both personal names and in reference to kings as officials called by the gods, cf. AHW 697ff. 3. nb' in Hebrew is used only in the reflexive and passive stems /5/.

b) hōzeh. The noun is probably an Aramic loanword /6/. The noun pattern kātîb (so Joûon 88.F.b and GK 84 a s) typically indicates an active substantive, i.e., hōzeh could be translated "one who sees."

### B. SOCIAL CONTEXT

The distinctiveness of the Judahite and the Israelite societies has yet to be appreciated fully. It has been clear for some time that certain traditions were prominent in Israel while yet others were important in Judah /7/. However, the social realities which these traditions represent have not been systematically discussed. What follows provides an attempt to specify those realities.

One important indication of the North-South distinction resides in the linguistic realm. It now seems clear that there were dialectical differences which distinguished Israel from Judah. For example, Cross and Freedman observed that in the northern area, diphthongs were regularly contracted—ay>ê and aw>ô—whereas in the South, the diphthongs were preserved, at



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

least until the end of the Judahite state /8/. As further evidence for this linguistic difference, one may point to the obvious linguistic difficulties present in the book of Hosea. Following Nyberg, Rudolph has noted morphological, lexical, and syntactical elements peculiar to Hosea /9/. Verbs which otherwise occur as transitives are used intransitively in Hosea (so hls, zrq, hlq). Gender is often different from other BH attestations; gepen is usually feminine, though in Hosea 10:1 it is masculine. Plural forms of nouns are similarly different from other BH occurrences. We expect zēbāhîm and yet zēbāhôt occurs (Hosea 4:19). And, as for the lexica, kesep in Hosea 9:6 means not the usual "money" or "silver" but instead "disillusionment." These instances serve to distinguish the Hebrew present in Hosea from the Judahite dialect which dominates the rest of the Hebrew Bible and serve to suggest strongly the existence of two classical Hebrew dialects. Further corroborating this thesis is the difficulty which Judahite editors had with the Hebrew of Hosea. H. Ginsberg cites Hosea 3:1 as an example of such difficulty, a text in which MT ke'ahābat yhw, two words usually translated "as Yahweh loves" is most probably to be understood as ke'ahabātî, one word meaning "as love" /10/. On linguistic grounds, then, we have strong reasons to distinguish the northern from the southern societies.

A brief review of the history during which there were two distinct nations also reveals the independent character of these two societies. Within two decades of the division of the United Kingdom into its two constituent parts, Ahijah is remembered as having conquered several northern cities: Bethel, Jeshanah and Ephron /11/. And soon thereafter, Baasha, in a military confrontation with Judah, established Ramah as a garrison on the Judahite border. Asa then secured the assistance of Ben-Hadad who proceeded to attack Israel. And so the story goes. One century and a half later, just before the collapse of the Israelite state, Damascus and Israel were allied against Judah, an alliance which forced Judah to seek help from the Neo-Assyrian empire. The rare periods of easier relations, for example, the Omride rapprochement with Jehosaphat, are best construed as cooperation between two independent and treaty-related states, not as amorphous impulses expressing an innate desire for the reunification of the Davidic empire. It is important to recognize the distinctness of these two states, societies which could act affably toward each other, but for which strident interaction was more often the rule. Each

## Five: Role Rationale

regularly treated the other as an independent state.

On cultural grounds, the proximity of Israel to the Phoenician seaports as well as to the Damascus markets no doubt offered greater opportunity for cosmopolitan inputs--products and practices from Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean coast--to have a significant influence, so the obvious example of Sidonian impact during the reign of Ahab (1 Kings 16). The ivory artifacts found at Samaria offer further evidence of Syro-Phoenician impact upon the northern kingdom. The evidence for such Syro-Phoenician influence on Judah is, after the time of Solomon, much less evident.

A further cultural difference entails the respective cultic symbols used by the two nations. For Judah, the imperial cultus of the Jerusalemite temple, Yahweh's house and the ark with its cherubim, were normative. The symbols in the North were different. The bulls of Jeroboam were archaic symbols designed to legitimate the cultus of the new northern state /12/. Similarly the shrines of Bethel and Dan, especially the former, were centers with ancient pedigrees, dating to the time of the patriarchs. Further, the priesthood of the northern region claimed a more ancient heritage than did that of the South /13/. Priesthood, ritual symbols, and cultic sites--all represent areas in which the northern state religion may be differentiated from that in the South.

As final evidence to exemplify the cultural differences under discussion, it is appropriate to adduce the epics of these respective societies /14/. The character of the Yahwistic epic as an expression of a Judahite perspective has long been apparent /15/. The Yahwistic compilation most probably derives from the time of the united monarchy and serves as an apologetic for and expression of the Jerusalemite-centered monarchy. In this epic, the Davidic empire is believed to represent the fulfillment of Yahweh's earlier promises to the patriarchs, e.g., the boundaries of the Davidic empire are exactly those envisioned in the Yahwistic promises to Abraham (Genesis 15:18). The Yahwistic epic is an attempt to present Israel's early traditions in conformity with her experience as an empire under the reign of the Davidic house ruling from Jerusalem.

Similarly the Elohist epic represents the response of the northern society to the institution of an independent state in that region /16/. The Elohist narrative is, like its Yahwistic counterpart, a reworking of earlier traditions in the service of a

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

new social reality. However, unlike the Yahwistic narrative, the Elohist source did not baptize the monarchic system wholesale. Rather, the Elohist perspective presents a position which affords the possibility of a picture of kingship subject to more constraints than does the Yahwistic one. In sum, each region, during its early national existence, formulated an epic which expressed the identity of the respective monarchic society.

Another crucial difference between the two nations lies in the economic sphere. Though the picture here is far from complete, we are justified in contending that the economies of Judah and Israel were quite different. In part this difference depended upon their respective ecologies. Wheat was a crop which could be grown in abundance in the northern upland area, land which benefited from considerably more rainfall than did the South. Barley, on the other hand, was the primary grain crop of the South, though of course, some wheat was grown there as well /17/. Of these two grains, wheat was by far the more in demand, essentially because it could be made into a much more palatable bread than could barley, even though the latter crop was a more drought-resistant, and, therefore, reliable crop /18/. Though Judah could grow grapes as well as olives, the latter most probably provided her major export crop—so 1 Kings 5:25 /19/. And yet the prime territory for growing olive trees was in the tribal territory attributed to Ephraim, again territory belonging to the northern kingdom. By c. 860 B.C.E., the territory controlled by Judah was heavily dependent on grape production /20/. Since the northern kingdom had the benefit of agricultural products which were in greater demand than were the products of Judah, and since Israel had a greater variety of agricultural produce to offer to the various markets, it stands to reason that the Israelite economy benefited from these ecological advantages. Furthermore, since the northern kingdom was in such close proximity to the Phoenician trading center of Tyre, there was an obvious demand for her products, the more so since Phoenicia's ability to grow her own grain was extremely limited /21/. Similarly, Israel no doubt benefited from access to the Damascus market system which extended both to the North and East, so 1 Kings 20:34.

Concomitantly, the structure of the Israelite and Judahite economies and markets appear to be different. The Israelite system, about which remarkably little is known, appears to be diffuse and heterogeneous. There were numerous major market

## Five: Role Rationale

centers, as befits the larger territory of the northern region. The large storehouses discovered at Samaria suggest royal involvement in trade since "rulers and kings have always played an important part in the foreign trade" /22/. However, there is little evidence of centralization in the northern kingdom.

The picture in Judah is different. Prior to the end of the eighth century, there was a network of regional towns, urban centers which apparently performed specialized economic functions. Debir was a center for textile production whereas other towns, e.g. Lachish, apparently produced wine (or olive oil). Further, these Judahite towns shared striking similarities. "The towns of Judah are notable for what they do not have: palaces or villas of wealthy aristocrats or princes, temples, market places, inner citadels" /23/. This specialization and uniformity suggests that "the monarchy in Jerusalem carefully controlled the economy of Judah in the eighth century, an assertion strongly supported by the prominence of the lmlk seals found in several towns" /24/. Jerusalem was the market place for the Judahite kingdom and this because the economy was controlled to a large extent by the royal house.

In sum, on linguistic, cultural, historical, ecological and political-economic grounds, it is licit to conclude that Judah and Israel comprised two quite distinctive social entities. That prophets were conceived differently in these two ambits is hardly surprising.

### C. ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN PARALLELS

As a prophetic title, nābî' is not attested epigraphically outside Israel. On two of the Lachish ostraca, the word hnb' appears (3.20 and 16.5); and on 6.5, Gibson, following Torczyner, restores it: dbry h(nb') /25/.

Hōzeh, on the other hand, is present in two sources outside Israel: the Zakir inscription and the plaster texts from Deir <sup>C</sup>Alla. In the former epigraph, the hzy speak a message of Ba<sup>C</sup>al-Shamayn directly to the king /26/. Ross translates: "And I lifted up my hand to Ba<sup>C</sup>al-Sha[may]n and Ba<sup>C</sup>al Shamay[n] answered me, and Ba<sup>C</sup>al-shamayn (spoke) to me (by) means of messengers (ḏdyn).". And in the recently published Deir <sup>C</sup>Alla texts, Combination I.1 reads [bl'm br b'r]r 'š hzh 'lhn, "Balaam son of Be<sup>C</sup>or, the man who was seer of the gods" /27/. Evidently the title hzh in this text was of some importance since it was written in red ink.

One hesitates to say that the nābî' was peculiar to Israel and

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

is thus to be distinguished quintessentially from the hōzeh since such a claim, and theories built upon it, could easily be falsified by one fortuitous spade. It is striking, however, that only the prophetic title hōzeh is attested outside Israel. We may certainly reject the earlier thesis that the nābî' was originally a Canaanite ecstatic whereas the hōzeh was fundamentally an Israelite phenomenon.

### D. DIVINE COMMISSION FORM

In order to define the divine commission form, I refer to Habel's classic study with which I am in basic agreement /28/. The prophetic books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel (and Deutero-Isaiah) all contain texts which share certain essential features:

Divine Confrontation  
Introductory Word  
Commission  
Objection  
Reassurance  
Sign

These texts purport to describe the way in which the individual was designated as a prophet. Needless to say, the stereotypic nature of these accounts makes claims for the historical veracity difficult to adjudicate. Furthermore, the actual function of these narratives is moot. Some have maintained that they were used to legitimate the prophet's activity in the course of the performance of the prophetic role. Others—notably Long—have contended that the commission narratives did not function importantly in the prophet's lifetime, but rather they served, within the prophetic book, to give authority to the prophet's now collected prophetic words /29/. I am not sure that these positions are necessarily exclusive. A report of a commissioning vision might well have been used on occasion to explain the source of prophetic authority though, to be sure, there were other important ways to authenticate prophetic authority, e.g., by making correct predictions—so Deuteronomy 18:22. And yet, this same story might function importantly within the context of the book to authenticate the prophet's words for a generation not contemporaneous with the prophet himself.

More important for our purposes is the apparent regionalism which these divine commissioning narratives entail. The

## Five: Role Rationale

prophetic books which contain commissioning narratives all derive from prophets who come from Judah. Furthermore, this genre is missing from the only northern prophetic book, Hosea. And if the situation of Amos can be clarified, if we can explain why the book of Amos, which derives from a Judahite prophet, does not contain a commissioning narrative, then the case for the peculiarly Judahite provenance of these narratives will become even stronger. Fortunately, in a paper entitled "Contextual Interpretation of the ʾānāk Vision in Amos 7:7-8," presented at the 1976 SBL Annual Meeting, S. Dean McBride pointed a way out of this difficulty. He contended that, due to textual confusion, the commissioning of Amos has been misunderstood. One may move beyond that contention to say that there was, therefore, no opportunity for a redactor to recast the commission vision into the standard form.

The basic points of McBride's communication are as follows (private communication):

1. The usual interpretation of ʾānāk as "plummet" is late and makes little, if any, sense. ʾānāk means "tin," not "lead." Furthermore, there is no evidence that plummets were ever made of tin in antiquity.
2. The overall structure of the vision reports in Amos 7-8 clearly exhibits pairing between the first and second and between the third and the fourth reports. The crux of the fourth report is a wordplay; this suggests that the same should be true for the third report, as a number of commentators have remarked.
3. The biographical episode in Amos 7:10-17 has obviously been inserted into the present context by an editor, but the purpose of its insertion at this point in the text has not been adequately explained. It should be clear, however, that the editor viewed Amos' confrontation with Amaziah as commentary on the purport of the third vision report, i.e., the third report was understood as Amos' commission to announce divine judgment on the northern kingdom.
4. In light of the above, Amos 7:7-8 can be appropriately interpreted as a wordplay vision, commissioning Amos for an active role as God's emissary to the North. (Although Amos already functions as an intercessor in the first two vision reports, this does not necessarily presuppose a specific prophetic role.) Recognition of the wordplay adds drama to what is otherwise a bland and redundant report. What Amos sees has meaning only when it is articulated in speech, i.e.,

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

when it is heard, and then interpreted in Yahweh's response to Amos (Amos 7:8). It is a mistake then to stress Amos 7:7 as the crux of the report, as most commentators have tried to do. The wall of tin or tin tablet held in Yahweh's hand is no more significant, in and of itself, than is the basket of summer fruit in Amos 8:1; in both cases, the objects have been chosen to facilitate wordplays (cf. similarly Jeremiah 1:11-13). The key to the wordplay in Amos 7:8 is the recognition that the second masculine singular pronominal suffix, consonantal k, was commonly pronounced -ak, rather than -kā as in the levelled Masoretic vocalization /30/. One may therefore read šm 'nk as šam(?)en(n)ak, "I am setting you," masculine participle plus energetic form of the second masculine singular pronominal suffix. That the Masoretes recognized the existence or viability of such a form is suggested by a number of anomalous constructions, so GK §§58i and 61h. The presence of the 'alep in the Masoretic orthography is a problem, though not an insurmountable one; it may be secondary, introduced when the wordplay was no longer understood, or it may simply be a scribal error, a dittography from 'ānāk in Amos 7:7. Another possibility is to read šām'ōnak, i.e., "I am placing you in the midst ...," or more literally, "I am placing your vigor in the midst of ...," a solution which is grammatically and semantically unimpeachable, cf. Jeremiah 1:18-19 and Ezekiel 3:8-9.

The 'ānāk vision, therefore, constitutes the commissioning of Amos to go to Israel. This commission was, however, not cast into the Judahite commission narrative form because the wordplay was misunderstood at a very early date. And it is for this reason that the book of Amos, which we would expect to have a commissioning narrative, does not include the narrative form.

The conception of the commissioning of a prophet, particularly as royal herald from Yahweh to Davidic vassal, fits remarkably well with the theopolitics of the Judahite monarchy (see below for a discussion of these traditions). On the other hand, it would have been inappropriate for Hosea, or any other nābî', to use a commissioning narrative for legitimation. The conception of prophetic authority present in Israel, e.g., the tradition which lies behind Deuteronomy 18:15ff, was different from that of the southern society. A northern prophet could appeal for his authority to the line of prophets who had acted as covenant spokesmen before him, so Hosea 6:5. That tradition,

## Five: Role Rationale

and the understanding of "a prophet like Moses" which it entailed, obviated the idea of individual commissioning which the southern legitimization formulae presumed. The southern traditions emphasized the singularity of the individual herald, not his continuity with earlier heralds. The southern prophet's authority therefore resides, or is at least symbolized, in the individual commissioning narrative, a typically Judahite prophetic literary feature.

### E. CONCEPTION OF PROPHETIC FUNCTIONS AND CONSTITUTIVE TRADITIONS

The differences in the ways in which prophetic authority is legitimated in Israel and Judah are directly linked to the cultural symbol systems of these two societies. And it is to these symbol systems that we now turn. In the introduction to his commentary on Ezekiel, Zimmerli included a section entitled "The Form Criticism and Tradition History of the Prophetic Call Narratives" /31/. Although Zimmerli claimed to be doing both form criticism and traditio-historical analysis, the latter of these two methods dominated. Since Habel has been able to demonstrate that a common structure underlay Jeremiah 1, Isaiah 6, and Ezekiel 1:1-3:15, Zimmerli's work can best be understood as an answer to the question: given the common Gattung, how does one explain the obvious differences between Jeremiah 1 and Isaiah 6? Zimmerli's thesis is that there are two different commissioning traditions. One, in which the visionary features are highlighted, depicts an enthronement scene in which Yahweh, enthroned either in the divine council or in the temple, authorizes someone to proclaim his message. This tradition is prominent in 1 Kings 22, a scene in which Micaiah ben Imlah defends his authority, and in Isaiah 6 (on 1 Kings 22, see below). In contrast, the Jeremianic commissioning narrative stands in a tradition also represented by the call narratives of Moses, Gideon and Saul /32/. It is my contention that these two traditions are characteristic of the southern and northern societies, respectively.

The traditio-historical background of the divine enthronement vision is not difficult to trace. Consistent with Muilenburg's observation that the divine council component was unimportant in the northern traditions, one may contend that this conception is rooted in the royal, theopolitical traditions of Judah. It is royal; Yahweh as king sits enthroned in the divine council. It is also theopolitical, and here the exclusively



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Judahite focus becomes evident. The earthly counterpart of the divine dwelling as setting for the divine council is the Jerusalem temple. Yahweh was at one and the same time enthroned in the heavenly dwelling and enthroned in the temple. One need hardly add that the temple was, in fact, the royal shrine. It was Yahweh's house built by the Davidic dynasty. The songs focusing on the Davidic house were constitutive for the cultus celebrated at that temple.

In this context, the term herald is particularly appropriate to describe the function of the hōzeh since it connotes the theopolitical manner in which the southern prophet was understood—as one designated in the divine council, as herald from the divine suzerain to the earthly vassal, and later, to his people. Royal idiom provided the language for divine-human communication.

To the best of my knowledge, the title herald as a description of the prophetic function was first used by Cross /33/. Recently he has put his position in the following way, "The prophet is the messenger of the divine court or council and his authority rests upon the absolute authority of the council, its great Judge or great King who pronounces the judgment which the prophetic messenger is to transmit ... The office (of the prophet) is that of the herald ... who repeats the message he bears in the name Yahweh and the divine council" /34/.

J. Holladay has made a very similar point in arguing that the herald of the ancient Near Eastern court served as a model for prophetic activity in Israel. He notes that the ancient Near Eastern herald "stood in the court of the Great King, participated in the deliberative processes of the court, received the declaration of the king's wishes from the king's own mouth, and then carried the tablet or sealed roll of papyrus to its destination, in the case of imperial state administration ... to the court of the vassal king" /35/. So too in Israel, "during the period of the monarchy, the prophet is the vital and essential living element in the divine government of the kingdom of Israel. He and he alone represents Yahweh's day-to-day interests in the governance of his vassal kingdom" /36/. Holladay astutely observes that, apart from the most legendary sections of the Elijah-Elisha narratives, "there is not one single indication of a prophetic oracle being delivered to anyone outside the royal court prior to the time of Amos." And later, just as Neo-Assyrian heralds began to address not only kings but entire populations—so the classical case of the Rabshakeh—the

## Five: Role Rationale

classical prophets as heralds spoke to the national population in Israel. "Messengers continued to go from king to king, but a new dimension was added to their activity. Now, as heralds they also proclaimed the will of the suzerain to the people of the land" /37/. This conception of the prophet as herald best fits the Judahite prophets; Gad, Nathan, and Isaiah are classical cases. It is with these prophets that the divine council imagery is most pronounced. The role of these prophets involves theopolitical activity, prophet as herald to the Davidic king and his kingdom. (Amos is no exception since the northern region was, according to the Judahite ideal, part of the Davidic empire /38/.)

The presence of a putative Judahite tradition in a text which purports to describe the Israelite court and northern prophets--1 Kings 22--is, on the surface, a problem. However, recent higher critical examination of this chapter has demonstrated that 1 Kings 22 is not a seamless narrative, and that the divine council material entered at a relatively late date /39/. Würthwein has argued convincingly that the entire Micaiah ben Imlah episode, 1 Kings 22:5-28, sits loosely in its larger literary context. The larger context is not an historical narrative but is better termed a saga in which the fate of a deceived deceiver, a king who goes out to battle in anonymity having clothed someone else with royal garments, is portrayed. Further, this saga is not fully consistent with the larger story of Ahab. In 1 Kings 22:40, a chronicler records that "Ahab slept with his fathers," a stereotypic expression used exclusively to describe those who had a peaceful death. The saga, in particular 1 Kings 22:34-35, does not warrant this view of Ahab's demise.

Not only does this saga about two kings sit loosely in the larger narrative context; the Micaiah ben Imlah episode is, itself, not an undisturbed literary piece. Würthwein identifies three basic layers in the narrative. The first--and original--story (1 Kings 22:5-9,13-17[18?],26-28) depicts the confrontation between the four hundred prophets and Micaiah. This confrontation focuses on the issue of whose words should be viewed as correct, an issue which is part and parcel of the way in which the dtr. traditions would conceive the issue of prophetic conflict. A second stratum in the story (1 Kings 22:10-12,24,25) introduces Zedekiah ben Chena'anah, a stratum which intensifies the confrontation. There are now two individual prophets active, two prophets doing and saying, at least formally, the same sorts of things. At this level, the point

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

of confrontation changes. The redactor conceives the controversy in terms of the concept of Yahweh's spirit. The true prophet has Yahweh's spirit as an authenticating force whereas the false prophet simply does not have that spirit for a warrant. The third stratum in the narrative, 1 Kings 22:19-22, presents Micaiah's retrospective vision. As Würthwein notes, the presence of two visions, verses 17 and 19-22, the latter to legitimate the former, is formally irregular. Furthermore, the second vision treats exclusively the issue of Yahweh's spirit, and this in a new way--how one receives that spirit. The retrospective vision is a response to the issue raised in the second level of the narrative--that which perceives the prophetic conflict in terms of spirit. Only at this point does the divine council motif enter the narrative. The divine council motif is therefore tertiary to the original story. 1 Kings 22:19-22 represents an attempt to answer a difficult question about prophetic authority couched in Yahweh's spirit language. And, one might add, in so doing, it uses the divine council tradition in a highly unusual way; nowhere else is the divine council understood as the source of Yahweh's spirit. The divine council regularly serves as the place in which a herald or messenger is commissioned, not a place from which mysterious spirits are sent. Although Würthwein did not theorize about the source of this final redactional addition in 1 Kings 22:19-22, it is not difficult to discern the traditio-historical background of the divine council scene. The similarities between Isaiah 6 and the vision in 1 Kings 22 have long been noted. And there can be little doubt that the vision in the Isaianic commission narrative incorporates the theopolitical imagery of Jerusalem--Yahweh enthroned in and above the Jerusalem temple. Since the dtr. history was compiled and revised in Judah, it is licit to maintain that the divine council material, which is on literary grounds a late addition to the text, represents an infusion of southern ideology into a narrative which initially described prophetic activity from the perspective of the ideology of the North, the future verifiability of the prophetic word /40/.

The conception of the nābî and attendant traditions are more difficult to describe than are those of the hōzeh because the nature of source material is more complex. Fortunately we may begin the discussion by referring to Muilenburg's seminal thesis about a distinctly northern prophetic tradition. In 1965, Muilenburg proposed to conceptualize the prophetic office by emphasizing Moses as a prophet /41/. Muilenburg constructed a

## Five: Role Rationale

traditio-historical argument for a Elohistic-Deuteronomist continuum, two traditions which "reach their culmination in the presentation of Moses as covenant mediator and prophet" /42/. Crucial to Muilenburg's thesis was the contention that the Sinai traditions in Exodus and Deuteronomy present a covenant with "Yahweh the suzerain and Israel the vassal," a situation which requires some sort of mediator since human vassals do not communicate easily with the divine suzerain. When examining Deuteronomy 18:15ff, Muilenburg comments, "Moses is surely speaking here as mediator of the covenant, and what is more, he is identifying the office of the mediator with that of the prophet" /43/. Muilenburg then moves to a consideration of the prophets who follow Moses. He maintains that "we can clearly discern a continuous stream of tradition in those records which come to us from the northern kingdom of Israel, notably in the Elohist, Samuel, the Deuteronomic speakers, Elijah, Hosea, Jeremiah, and to a degree, Second Isaiah" /44/.

Four of Muilenburg's conclusions are directly relevant to this discussion /45/:

1. There is a variety among Israel's prophets. In this variety, one may speak of those who understand themselves from the perspective of the northern traditions.
2. "The (northern) traditions which we have examined have as their common matrix the covenant of Yahweh with Israel at Sinai-Horeb."
3. "That there were prophets who understood themselves as having participated in the decisions and announcements of the divine council is certainly true, but it is doubtful if we can say this of all of them, especially those from the North."
4. Moses and the prophetic figures who follow him are best understood as messengers. In the second place, "they are speakers for Yahweh ... They are politicians ... proclaiming covenantal proclamations ..."

Two issues which Muilenburg's study raises require attention. The first one is of terminology. The title covenant mediator has, in recent scholarship, acquired the meaning of an actor in a covenant renewal ceremony, a sense which Muilenburg did not intend and a sense with which I disagree /46/. To avoid these implications, I prefer to use the phrase covenant spokesman.

The second issue, the character of the northern picture, is more subtle. Because the sources for this picture are the dtr. history, the deuteronomic law code, and Hosea and Jeremiah—both prophetic books which have undergone dtr.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

redaction--it may appear that this northern picture is no more than a dtr. creation. In fact, Blenkinsopp has recently argued that this view of the covenant mediator is a dtr. construction designed to sanction the prophetic succession of Mosaic authority, the prophetic authority to communicate divine stipulations and to proclaim breach of covenant as well as ensuing curses /47/. Such is, no doubt the function of Deuteronomy 18:15ff. Nevertheless, the activity of the prophets, when it is distinguished from the dtr. matrix, appears to be both consistent with and yet independent from the dtr. perspective. For example, the formulators of the deuteronomic law code went to some trouble to present a qualified and controlled view of the place of the king in Israelite society. It is surely no accident that the northern prophets appear to place the king under the control and critique of prophetic performance. Huffmon has recently contended that the nābî' prophetic type had "a special role in regard to the king, a role continued particularly in the North ... The prophet as the charismatic messenger installs and legitimates the melek, or perhaps, preferably, the nāgîd" /48/. This prophetic function, while not stipulated by the deuteronomic law code, is certainly consistent with it, especially if the northern prophets have, as Wolff has contended for Hosea, a certain Levitic connection /49/.

The position of critical authority vis-à-vis kingship, which the northern prophets represented, is particularly pronounced in Hosea and Jeremiah, see especially Hosea 8:4, 13:10-11 and the critique of kingship in Jeremiah 21:11-23:8 /50/. It is important to recognize that this critical stance is similar to, though not identical with, that propounded in the deuteronomic law of kingship, Deuteronomy 17:14-20. There is, therefore, a northern prophetic stance toward kingship which is clearly consistent with the views of prophecy and kingship to be found in the dtr. materials and yet which represents the actual work of Israelite prophets.

As this example of the relation of the prophet to kingship in the northern traditions suggests, the nābî' functioned as covenant spokesman. He promulgated Yahweh's directives, as present in the covenant stipulations, to the people and their institutions. The people were the primary contracting party with Yahweh; they were not, as in the South, an extension of the royal house, as contracting party. Further, Yahweh, as covenant partner, spoke not so much from the divine assembly as he did from Sinai and its cultic reflexes. In sum, the nābî'

## Five: Role Rationale

represented Yahweh in the matter of the covenant to the Israelite people: informing, warning, indicting, and finally, judging them /51/.

Just as there was a reason for the Judahite theopolitical traditions—Jerusalem was construed as Yahweh's dwelling—so too the northern traditions has a raison d'être. One fundamental socio-political factor distinguished Israel from Judah. Israel was a confederation of tribes; Judah was one tribe. The contractual arrangements—whether formal or informal—which allowed for the unification and recognition of various tribal interests remained an important legal tradition in the North, even after the institution of kingship. As Ishida has recently suggested, tribal intrests and rivalries in the North were one important factor which distinguished the history of the monarchy in Israel from the history of the monarchy in Judah /52/. Even in the monarchic period, legal instruments--various contracts--to enable the tribes to function conjointly were necessary. Covenant and contract were, therefore, an inextricable part of the northern social experience, an experience which had a significant impact upon the way in which the activity of the prophet in the North was conceived.

By way of synthesis, I conclude that ancient Israel's central morality prophets were understood differently in the respective societies of which they were a part. In Judah, the prophet was conceived of using the theopolitical ideology of that society. In this context, the divine council as source of Yahweh's decisions was a dominant motif. The hōzeh was understood to be a herald from the divine council to humanity. In contrast, the treaty idiom which had such an important function in enabling concerted action by the disparate elements making up the northern nation, allowed for a different conception of the prophet as nābî, one who acted as direct spokesman for Yahweh in treaty matters. These two concepts of central morality prophets fit the socio-religious ideologies of Judah and Israel respectively.

## F. MODE OF DIVINE-HUMAN COMMUNICATION

When concluding his essay on the prophetic office, Muilenburg wrote, "more than all else, Moses comes and the prophets come to speak the Word of Yahweh, and it is the power of his Word which lies behind their various pronouncements. This stress upon the Word of Yahweh in the northern traditions is not the same as that of the prophets from the

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

South. From the beginning to end in the North, the Word assumes a central role" /53/. The reason for this special concentration upon the Word is, I suspect, quite simple. The covenant for which these prophets were spokesman was, above all, a collection of words--words which can, among other things, be spoken, heard, concentrated (the decalogue), and memorized. The predominant image of Yahweh communicating with the nābî' as covenant spokesman to the people was therefore that of the word. Paradigmatic texts in this regard include: Deuteronomy 18:18, "I will put my words in his mouth and he shall speak to them all that I command them"; Jeremiah 1:9, "Behold, I put my words in my mouth"; Hosea 6:5, "... I have slain them by the words of my mouth."

As for the South, the word hōzeh itself suggests the prominence of visual imagery. Jepsen argues that what is significant about the root hzh in the context of prophecy is the visual mode of revelation it implies /54/. Furthermore, the vision itself is prominent in Amos and Isaiah and is not attested in Hosea. Finally, it is surely no accident that the vision formula hzh hdbṛ/mś' 'šr PN hzh is used only of southern prophets (Isaiah 1:1; 2:1; 13:1; Amos 1:1; Micah 3:1; Habakkuk 1:1). The reason for the prominence of vision probably has to do with the place of the divine council in the southern traditions. Commissioning and speaking in a divine council could be visualized on the basis of the earthly royal analogy. Further, the cultic reflex of the divine council, so Isaiah 6, provided yet another vocabulary of visual imagery. It is instructive that the motif of the prophet's mouth being touched is used so differently in Isaiah 6 and in Jeremiah 1. In the former text, the motif is part of the process whereby the prophet is allowed into the divine presence and council, whereas in the latter text, its use constitutes the method whereby Yahweh's word is conveyed directly to the prophet.

### G. INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION

The significance of the oracles against the nations (hereafter OAN) are best understood by reference to Amos' collection of this material. Why are only the small, Syro-Palestinian states, and not Egypt or Assyria indicted? Following the analysis of Cross, one may answer that these small states constituted the Davidic empire, an empire over which David and his heirs were suzerain /55/. Hence those states could be indicted as vassals disobedient to the strictures of a treaty. By way of extension,

## Five: Role Rationale

the later prophets indicted the larger ancient Near Eastern empires, not because Israel's king had ever functioned as their suzerain, but rather because Yahweh's imperium was understood to encompass all political powers. For the purposes of this study, it is sufficient to state that the OAN grew out of one particular milieu, the political realities of empire ruled from Jerusalem, as well as the ideological expressions of that reality (so for example the royal psalms). We have no evidence for a similar expression of international imperium in the North. The absence of OAN from Hosea is, therefore, to be expected; it is not an accidental omission. There is little place in the normative northern traditions for Israel to indict or to be sovereign over other nations.

### H. ROLE RATIONALE

How are we to understand this nābî'-hōzeh distinction if both prophetic types together constitute what Lewis has called central morality prophecy? I contend that the hōzeh distinction does not point to two different roles; rather, this distinction comprises two different role legitimations for an individual as central prophet. To use the language of P. Berger, "... the institutional world requires legitimations, that is, ways by which it can be 'explained' and justified" /56/. The meaning of the social order often appears to be arbitrary since it is an order which is simply there. Hence it becomes necessary to articulate the meaning of this order, to offer various legitimating formulae. Such formulae may be of various sorts: incipient statements (i.e., that is the way it is done), rudimentary forms of theoretical propositions, explicit theories, and appeals to symbolic universes /57/. Israelite language about prophecy is most frequent at the second and fourth levels. What is put in personal language in Jeremiah 20:9, "If I say, 'I will not mention him, or speak any more his name,' there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot"; is placed in rudimentary theoretical form in Amos 3:8b, "The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who will not prophesy?" Such are two legitimations of the central morality prophet's role. However, these particular formulations were probably viewed as unsatisfactory by those in the society who were more theoretically inclined /58/. They might ask: just how is it that Yahweh speaks to the prophets, and who can legitimately claim to have Yahweh's words? Such questions are presumed in the



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

formulations of the commissioning narratives from the South and in the language of the Mosaic prophet native to the North. These formulations comprise systematic explanations, appeals to what Berger terms the symbolic universes of the respective societies: Yahweh's divine council and the Israelite covenant with Yahweh. "... The symbolic universe orders and thereby legitimates everyday roles, priorities, and operating procedures, by placing them sub specie universi, that is in the context of the most general frame of reference conceivable" /59/. Failure to provide such theoretical statements to explain the character of prophetic authority would constitute the threat to the social order. "The legitimation of the institutional order is faced with the ongoing necessity of keeping chaos at bay. All social order is precarious. All societies are constructions in the face of chaos" /60/. To allow spokesmen for Yahweh, the central morality prophets, to be active in either Judah or Israel without systematic legitimation in the context of the main social symbol system would be to invite just such chaos.

In ancient Israel there were two social orders, those of the northern and southern societies. Each society emphasized distinctive religious elements in order to compose its symbolic universe. The Davidic-Zion symbol system was normative for the South and was, by definition, unavailable to the North, a society which emphasized the treaty symbol. What is important for our purposes is to note that the central morality prophet was legitimated differently in these two distinct societies; not inconsistently, but differently. The central prophet as nābî' was understood in Israel as covenant spokesman; the central prophet as hōzeh was perceived in Judah as herald of the divine council.

## Chapter Six

### THE STUDY OF PROPHETIC ROLES: FURTHER ISSUES

The analysis of Israelite prophetic activity would ideally proceed by applying the full range of role theory's analytical tools, which sociologists and anthropologists have developed, to the Biblical and ancient Near Eastern prophetic texts. However, it soon becomes clear that only some of these conceptual tools are relevant to the study of prophetic behavior since the society which we are studying, ancient Israel, does not allow the same sort of examination as do the societies which sociologists and anthropologists can regularly analyze on a firsthand basis. Only some of the categories of role theory, therefore, remain germane to the study of ancient societies. Furthermore, of the relevant components of role theory, more can be said about some elements than can be said about others. For example, the category of organismic involvement is of vast importance for the conceptual clarification of the place of ecstasy in critical descriptions of prophetic behavior. Less may be said about the categories which I broach here, though the topics themselves are no less important in theory than are those treated in the study.

#### A. ROLE SKILLS

One obvious variable in role performance is the degree of competence with which a role is performed. Though John and Bill are both alpine skiers, John might be an Olympic medalist whereas Bill is only a decent recreational skier. Both can enact the role of skier, and yet one is significantly better at it than is the other. John has more fully developed the skills appropriate to the actions which the role skier entails. Similarly, two individuals may be ordained Christian clergypersons. Both may be charged with "preaching the Word of God," and yet one may be deemed more successful, both by his or her clerical peers and by his or her respective parishes. The more successful preacher has, presumably, mastered the requisite rhetorical skills, skills which include the ability to be an effective public speaker. Both ordained individuals could lay claim to the role—clergyperson—and yet one is more skilled at it than is the other. So it is with teachers, fathers, mothers, tax consultants, and prophets. "Role

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

skills refer to those characteristics possessed by individuals which result in effective and convincing role enactment: aptitude, appropriate experience, and specific training" /1/. Enactment of the prophetic role surely entailed skills, the ability to communicate with--though not necessarily convince--an audience (whether an individual or a group).

Effective role enactment depends upon several kinds of skills: motoric, cognitive and role-specific skills. As for the first, "enactment of a role requires appropriate posture, movements, facial expression and tone of voice" /2/. Since there is significant evidence to suggest that many of Israel's prophets proclaimed their oracles publicly, there can be no doubt that certain motoric skills were important to the enactment of the prophetic role, though little other than the obvious ability to speak clearly and forcefully may be adduced in this regard.

The cognitive skills cover a wide variety of categories: empathy, social sensitivity, identification. One of these elements, in particular, is important for this study since the term empathy appears to be related to processes observable in the prophetic literature. "The term empathy is used in a variety of ways, but it is often used to describe the ability to put oneself in the other's place in more than just a cognitive or predictive sense" /3/. Certain portions of the book of Hosea suggest that this prophet, when speaking Yahweh's words, assumed an empathetic posture with his audience. /4/.

How can I give you up, O Ephraim!

How can I hand you over, O Israel!

How can I make you like Admah!

How can I treat you like Zebaiim!

My heart recoils within me,

my compassion grows warm and tender.

I will not execute my fierce anger,

I will not again destroy Ephraim;

for I am God and not man,

the Holy One in your midst,

and I will not come to destroy. (Hosea 11:8-9)

A further cognitive skill would be the ability to deal with the hostility which a prophet encounters when he speaks words which are perceived as threatening by the audience, the knowledge when to withdraw (e.g., Jeremiah 28:11), and the ability to defuse a dangerous situation.

There are, finally, role-specific skills necessary for prophetic

## Six: Further Issues

role enactment. The most prominent, though rarely commented upon, is the ability to compose poetry. Prophets were regularly poets. How they acquired this skill, we do not know. However, a skill it was. We would do the prophets injustice if we thought their mode of speech was simply the way in which members of an archaic society spoke. D. Freedman has commented upon this connection between prophecy and poetry in the following way:

Poetry and prophecy in the Biblical tradition share so many of the same features and overlap to such an extent that one cannot be understood except in terms of the other; in short, they are different aspects or categories of the same basic phenomenon, viz., the personal contact between God and man, and the verbal expression of it through the action of the Holy Spirit. The argument is essentially that the prophets were inheritors of the great poetic tradition of Israel's adventure in faith and maintained, enhanced, renewed, and recreated it in the face of increasingly bitter opposition of those who preferred their religion in more manageable prose forms and who conceded (grudgingly) only the realms of liturgy (hymnody) and wisdom (gnomic and spiritual verse) to the poets /5/.

To be a prophet was to be a poet, though not in an automatic way. Divine-human contact did not necessarily result in carefully crafted verse. Rather the poetry of the prophets was constructed in a fashion consistent with the canons of Northwest Semitic prosody, i.e., it was an acquired role-specific skill.

Prophetic role enactment entailed not only the composition of poetry, but it also involved the formulation of poetry in particular rhetorical forms. Prophetic poetry does not occur—at least before the exile—as long lyric poems, but rather as relatively short units with standard structures and formulaic elements /6/. Tucker maintains that "the most common distinctive genre of prophetic speech is the prophecy, a genre of two basic parts (1) the prophet presents a communication from God, and (2) announces future events" /7/. Much other prophetic poetry was formulated using a variety of rhetorical devices, language drawn from several social institutions: the cult, school, and law court to cite the most prominent ones. The ability to use the canons of Northwest Semitic prosody to formulate short poems using the language of specific social

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

institutions was another of the essential role-specific skills of the prophets.

Yet another important role skill of the central morality prophets was the knowledge necessary to comment upon the international scene. In the OAN, the prophets demonstrate remarkable knowledge about ancient Near Eastern geography, economics and religion. Isaiah's knowledge about Egyptian modes of production is impressive:

The fisherman will mourn and lament,  
all who cast hook in the Nile;  
and they will languish  
who spread nets upon the water.  
The workers in combed flax will be in despair  
and the weavers of white cotton. (Isaiah 19:8-9)

In not dissimilar fashion, Ezekiel comments upon Israelite trade with Tyre in the following way:

Judah and the land of Israel trade with you:  
they exchanged for your merchandise wheat, olives,  
and early figs, honey, oil, and balm. (Ezekiel 27:17)

In this regard, prophets could be remarkably cosmopolitan figures, no doubt, at least in Judah, because they lived in a capital city and because they had significant contacts with the royal court. Not to have knowledge of the international scene would have hampered the southern prophet's ability to treat the full range of issues which he was apparently expected to address /8/.

The prophets knew not only the international scene; they were experienced observers of the domestic situation as well. They understood the realities of economic transactions including real estate dealings. Only such insider's knowledge would enable the charges of bribery (Isaiah 1:23), inequitable measuring mechanisms (Amos 8:5), and improper real estate practices (Micah 2:2) to be made. In order to perform their role, the prophets had to be astute analysts of the economic and social scene in their nation.

Further, the prophets apparently had to know a remarkable amount of history, especially Israel's early history. Ezekiel is exemplary. His comment about Israelite origins is astoundingly perceptive:

Your origin and your birth are of the land of the Canaanites;

## Six: Further Issues

Your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite.  
(Ezekiel 16:3)

Only this sort of knowledge about Israel's early period could enable Ezekiel's remarkable Unheilsgeschichte, a theme and variation forged out of the orthodox version of Israel's history /9/. After reviewing the interplay between Yahweh's initiatives and Israel's rebellions, Ezekiel's Yahweh comments:

Moreover I gave them statutes that were not good  
and ordinances by which they could not have life;  
and I defiled them through their very gifts in making them  
offer by fire all their first-born, that I might horrify  
them;

I did it that they might know that I am the Lord.  
(Ezekiel 20:25-26)

In sum, there was a variety of skills necessary for a person to enact the prophetic role. In particular, one may point to certain rhetorical and poetic abilities as well as to a fund of knowledge, experiences, and analytical abilities which allowed for convincing prophetic role enactment.

### B. ROLE EXPECTATION

Another important category of role theory is role expectation, a category which serves as a conceptual bridge between social structure and role behavior. "Role expectations are comprised of the rights and privileges, the duties and obligations of any occupant of a social position in relation to persons occupying other positions in the social structure" /10/. Though such expectations can and do change, they regularly act as imperatives on role enactment. "Role expectations can be said to define the limits or range of tolerated behavior" /11/.

It is no special revelation to say that role expectations for Israel's prophets were not always clear. Nevertheless, if we infer from reported role performance, as this is presented in the prophetic literature, we may conclude that prophets were expected to do several sorts of things. One obvious element is the expectation that the prophets would speak Yahweh's words or announce the decisions of the divine council, to use the most general symbols. In this context, they could be expected to speak words which announced forthcoming destruction: to foreign nations (Obadiah on Edom), to Israel (Amos 2:6-16), and to Judah (Jeremiah 9:6-8). Less frequent, but of the same basic

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

type, are prophecies of salvation, announcements from that same source that something good will happen, so Amos 9:11-12. Such speech serves to inform a group or a society of its future, and it is apparently expected to do little more than inform. It serves to reveal theopolitical reality as that reflects the divine-human relationship.

However, another range of expectations, the expectation that the prophet can act to affect the theopolitical reality, exists. The prophet could exhort and, in so doing, attempt to influence the behavior of his audience:

Seek good, and not evil,  
that you may live;  
and so Yahweh, God of Hosts, will be with you,  
as you have said.  
Hate evil and love good,  
it may be that Yahweh, God of Hosts  
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. (Amos 5:14-15)

(Cf. also Micah 6:1-8; Jeremiah 4:1-4; Zephaniah 2:3.)

However, the prophet was also apparently expected to try to affect the other contracting party in the divine-human relationship, the deity. Amos is portrayed in a vision as interceding on behalf of Israel:

"O Yahweh God, forgive, I beseech you.  
How can Jacob stand?  
He is so small."  
Yahweh repented concerning this;  
"It shall not be," said Yahweh. (Amos 7:2-3)

Role expectations for the prophets were therefore multiple. These expectations included reporting Yahweh's words as well as attempting to affect both parties in the divine-human relationship /12/.

This variety in role expectation could result in role dissensus, one form of which occurs in a situation in which one expectation is held by the role performer and another expectation is held by a group with whom the person interacts. For example, the prophet's audience might think that the prophet should or could intercede on the people's behalf whereas the prophet might think he had only a reportorial role, that he could only proclaim a decision which had been made. Or the prophet might want to exercise an intercessory function on behalf of the people and the deity might not be understood to offer that

## Six: Further Issues

option. Given the two quite distinct role expectations which I have already identified--and there are more--there was a significant opportunity for role expectation dissensus to develop as Israelite prophets performed their roles.

### C. COMPLEX ROLE PHENOMENA

Role theory recognizes a number of complex role phenomena: multiple roles, role conflict, role learning, and the effects of role enactment on social identity. The first such issue treats the problem of simultaneous and conflicting roles. For example, a person enacting the prophetic role might at the same time be a member of the Judahite society against which he is directing a judgment of destruction, or he might be pronouncing curses against a country against which his own society is arrayed in battle. In the first case, the simultaneous role occupation entails inherent tension whereas the second case entails no such tension.

Perhaps more important is the issue of role conflict, of which there are two basic sorts: interrole conflict and intrarole conflict /13/. The first is due to simultaneous occupancy of two or more positions which have incompatible role expectations. For an example one may adduce the department chairperson in a large university, a person who is both professor and administrator. He or she is a part of the administrative structure of the university and yet still functions as a member of the teaching faculty. The occupancy of these two roles, especially during budget discussions, may entail conflict as that person seeks to balance the interests of the faculty with those of the administration. The example of the prophet as messenger of indictment and destruction to a society and as citizen of that same society is just such a form of role conflict.

"Intra-role conflict involves contradictory expectations held by two or more groups or relevant others regarding the same role" /14/. For example, the school superintendent enacts a role for which various groups--teachers, parents, school board members--often have quite different expectations. Such intrarole conflict may also derive from conflicting expectations held by a single group. For example, a study of female college students has demonstrated that families of those students have often expected them to achieve good grades and, at the same time, to engage in a vibrant social life, goals not always easy to achieve in equal measure. One may find examples of intrarole conflict in Israelite prophecy. An obvious example is Jeremiah's



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

plight narrated in Jeremiah 38, a situation in which two separate groups evaluate Jeremiah's enactment of the prophetic role differently. The princes claimed that Jeremiah's oracles constituted sedition and he therefore deserved to die. "So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son ..." (Jeremiah 38:6). However, Ebedmelech, in consultation with Zedekiah, evaluated Jeremiah's words differently: "My lord and king, these men have done evil in all that they did to Jeremiah the prophet by casting him into the cistern ..." (Jeremiah 38:9). One performance is judged differently by two groups. From the perspective of role theory, the prophetic role was doubly problematic; it could entail interrole as well as intrarole conflict.

Such role conflict regularly results in cognitive strain /15/. Cognitive strain, something which we should expect to find as a result of prophetic role enactment, "denotes the marked increase in cognitive activity that occurs while conduct is delayed pending instantiation or classification of incompatible outputs" /16/. Further, "existence of cognitive strain leads to an increase of behavior directed toward a resolution of the condition." Sarbin lists five basic types of such resolution: instrumental acts or rituals, attention deployment, change in belief system, tranquilizers or releasers, and no or unsuccessful adaptation.

A cursory reading of the prophetic literature provides hints of cognitive strain and its resolution or unsuccessful adaptation. In Isaiah 6-9, Isaiah, during the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis, apparently expected the people to listen to his message--that things will go well for Judah if they but trust in Yahweh. However, Isaiah was apparently ignored. Hence he engaged in what Sarbin calls instrumental action. He wrote down what he had been saying and thereby isolated it from the realm of social interaction (Isaiah 8:16). The message can now have an autonomy or fixity which need not involve a particular prophetic role enactment and thereby no longer engender role conflict. Without some sort of similar action, the prophetic role conflict would undergo no successful adaptation. Sarbin contends that if cognitive strain persists at high levels, if the individual is unable to reduce its intensity, a variety of somatic behavioral effects will result /17/. I think it is not unfair to suggest that the book of Jeremiah may reflect precisely such unsuccessful adaptation portrayed in conventional imagery, so Jeremiah 20:9.

Role skills, role expectations and complex role phenomena

## Six: Further Issues

serve to demonstrate further the applicability of role theory to the study of Israelite prophecy. Fruitful study of what has been termed false prophecy or prophetic conflict might well ensue from the application of the categories of role expectation to the discussion.

## Chapter Seven CONCLUSIONS

Scholars have explained the essence or essential features of Israelite prophetic activity in several ways, most often by using categories such as office, ecstasy, or charisma. However, the use of such categories in critical discussions of Israelite prophecy has not been particularly productive. Office, as that term has been regularly applied by sociologists to a type of role found in a legal or rational authority structure, does not aptly describe the role of the prophet. Ecstasy, or, more precisely termed, trance or possession behavior does not appear prominently, if at all, in the behavior of Israel's prophets. Finally, the concept of charisma, as it was developed by Weber, does not describe a style of leadership characteristic of Israel's prophets. Those who rely on these categories presume one characteristic mode of prophetic behavior and thereby tend to ignore the many ways in which Israel's prophets acted as prophets. By appropriating insights drawn from the study of other social roles, we have discovered that the prophets performed their roles in many ways. For example, they acted at several different levels of behavioral involvement: levels of behavior which Sarbin would term ritual acting, engrossed acting, classical hypnotic role taking, and histrionic neurosis.

The role labels of the prophets--rō'eh, 'îš (hā)ʿēlōhîm, nābî' and hōzeh--mean little in and of themselves. Nevertheless, study of the roles to which these labels were applied reveals a significant variety in the role structure of Israelite prophecy. The term rō'eh was used to describe a resident, urban figure who functioned in the public sacrificial cultus and who could act as a consultant on a fee basis (see 1 Samuel 9:15-17,21; 10:1,3-4). The title 'îš (hā)ʿēlōhîm was used to depict an itinerant holy man who was related to urban support groups, the bēnē hannēbî'im, with whom he enjoyed a symbiotic relationship. Elisha, and the related "sons of the prophets," exemplify this type of prophetic activity. Using the analytical categories of L. Lewis, we may term the 'îš (hā)ʿēlōhîm and those related to him as peripheral prophets. They were peripheral, though not external to, the more central roles and structures in the society, and they venerated a god who was

## Seven: Conclusions

construed as marginal by the more central elements in the society.

The role labels hōzeh and nābî' do not refer to two different roles. Rather, they comprise two socio-politically oriented role labels used to refer to individuals who performed one basic role. The one role to which these two role labels refer is that which Lewis terms the central morality prophet, a prophet who regularly legitimates or sanctions the central values and structures of the society and who venerates a deity of distinct moral quality, a deity who is perceived as central to the social order. This one role--central morality prophecy--was articulated differently in Judah and Israel, and thereby acquired two different role labels: nābî' in the North and hōzeh in the South. Gad and Amos are appropriately termed hōzeh while Hosea is properly described as nābî'. The prophet's role as central morality prophet was conceived and legitimated within two distinct societies, Judah and Israel, each of which had its own symbolic universe.

Considerable variety is, therefore, present in Israelite prophecy--variety in the behavioral involvement with which the prophetic role was enacted, and variety in the number of roles which made up the phenomenon we summarize as Israelite prophecy. What unifies these various forms of prophetic activity and ideology is not one society, nor one behavioral characteristic, nor even one theology. Rather what allows us to speak about Israelite prophecy is that these prophets enacted a role in the service of only one god, Yahweh, conceived though he was in varying ways.

## NOTES

### Notes to Chapter One INTRODUCTION: BEYOND "CHARISMA" AND "OFFICE"

- 1 K. Baltzer, "Considerations Regarding the Office and Calling of the Prophet," HTR 61 (1968) 567-581.
- 2 P. Berger, "Charisma and religious innovation; the social location of Israelite prophecy," ASR 28 (1963) 940-950.
- 3 H. Gross, "Gab es in Israel ein prophetisches Amt?," EThL 41 (1965) 5-19.
- 4 H. Gross, "Institution und Charisma im Alten Testament," TTZ 82 (1973) 65-77.
- 5 J. Muilenburg, "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel," The Bible in Modern Scholarship, ed. J. Hyatt (New York: Abingdon, 1965) 74-79.
- 6 M. Noth, "Office and Vocation in the Old Testament," The Laws in the Pentateuch and other Studies (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) 229-249.
- 7 H. Reventlow, "Prophetenamt und Mittleramt," ZTK 58 (1961) 269-284.
- 8 For a discussion, see the article of Berger cited in note 2 and J. Williams, "The Social Location of Israelite Prophecy," JAAR 37 (1969) 153-165. B. Long recognizes some difficulty with the concept of charisma and yet accepts its general applicability: "Prophetic Authority as Social Reality," Canon and Authority. Essays in Old Testament Religion and Theology, ed. G. Coats & B. Long (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977) 3-20.
- 9 M. Weber, The Sociology of Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964) 46.
- 10 As quoted in Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers, ed. S. Eisenstadt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968) 48.
- 11 Cf. the analysis of charisma, as that is relevant to the problem of authority in the early church, by J. Schütz, "Charisma and Social Reality in Primitive Christianity," JR 54 (1974) 51-70; Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority (SNTSMS 26) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975).
- 12 See D. Petersen, "Max Weber and the Sociological Study of Ancient Israel," Religious Change and Continuity, ed. H.

## Notes to Chapter One

Johnson (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979) 117-149; and C. Camic, "Charisma: Its Preconditions, Varieties, and Consequences," Sociological Inquiry 1980, in press. Camic, using certain insights drawn from psychoanalytic theory, as well as a fresh reading of Weber, proposes a new way of understanding the concept of charisma. Cf. W. Friedland, "For a Sociological Concept of Charisma," Social Forces 43 (1964) 18-26.

13 D. Emmett, "Prophets and their Societies," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society 86 (1956) 16.

14 See A. Malamet, "Charismatic Leadership in the Book of Judges," Magnalia Dei. The Mighty Acts of God, ed. F. Cross, W. Lemke, & P. Miller (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976) 152-168.

15 Cf. R. Wilson, Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) 57-58.

16 See, for a discussion, "Amt. III. Dogmengeschichtlich und dogmatisch," RGG, Vol 1, 337-341; "Geistliches, geistliches Amt," Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, ed. A. Jauck, Vol 1 (Leipzig: J. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1899) 469 ff.

17 See Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelische-lutherischen Kirche (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956) 58, article V of the Augsburg Confession.

18 Noth, "Office and Vocation in the Old Testament," 230-242. Weber's own use of Amt has probably influenced these discussions, especially in Germany. However, the influence is conveyed not through his precise formulations but, more generally, through the culture's appropriation of that term. Cf. the similar fate of E. Erikson's "identity crisis."

19 M. Weber, Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology, ed. G. Roth & C. Wittich, Vol 1 (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968) 215.

20 Weber, Economy and Society, 220-221.

21 Noth, "Office and Vocation in the Old Testament" 245-247. The influence of the theological--especially Reformation--domain is readily apparent in Noth's description of prophecy as nonoffice.

22 Weber, Economy and Society, 246-254.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

### Notes to Chapter Two ROLE THEORY AND THE STUDY OF PROPHECY

1 T. Sarbin & V. Allen, "Role Theory," The Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol 1, ed. G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1968) 482.

2 "What prophets regularly do" and the way in which these patterns of behavior are conceived comprise role expectations. Role expectations exercise a powerful influence upon the behavior of the individual and yet the individual may deviate from specific role expectations. See chapter six, section B, for a discussion of role expectations within the context of Israelite prophecy.

3 An obvious and significant exception to this statement is G. Theissen, Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), one part of which is an "Analysis of Roles," pages 7-30. This analysis depends upon H. Sünden, Die Religion und die Rollen. Eine psychologische Untersuchung der Frömmigkeit (Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1966), a work which stresses the psychological element almost to the exclusion of the sociological component of this social-psychological theory. Hence Theissen's own study, while a welcome exercise, is not as methodologically complete as it otherwise might have been. Cf. M. Buss, "The Social Psychology of Prophecy", Prophecy. Essays presented to Georg Fohrer on his sixty-fifth birthday, ed. J. Emerton (BZAW 150) (Berlin: de Gruyter 1980) 1-11.

4 V. Turner, "Religious Paradigms and Political Action: Thomas Becket at the Council of Northampton," Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1974) 60-97.

5 T. Parsons, Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966).

6 For example one may cite the work of M. Rowton, "Autonomy and Nomadism in Western Asia," Or 42 (1973) 247-258; "Urban Autonomy in a Nomadic Environment," JNES 32 (1973) 201-215, and in the field of Biblical studies, R. Wilson, Genealogy and History in the Biblical World (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1977).

7 Apart from works cited elsewhere in this study, I would mention M. Banton, Roles: An Introduction to the Study of Social Relations (NY: Basic Books, 1965); W. Good, "A Theory of Role Strain," ASR 25 (1960) 483-496; L. Neiman & J. Hughes, "The Problem of the Concept of Role: A Re-Survey of the

## Notes to Chapter Two

Literature," Social Forces 30 (1951) 141-149; H. Popitz, Der Begriff der sozialen Rollen als Element der soziologischen Theorie (Tübingen: Mohr, 1967); T. Parsons & E. Shils, "Values, Motives and Systems of Action," Toward a General Theory of Action, ed. T. Parsons & E. Shils (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1954) 47-275.

8 R. Linton, The Study of Man (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1936) 113-114.

9 R. Dahrendorf, "Homo Sociologicus. On the History, Significance, and Limits of the Category of Social Role," Essays in the Theory of Society (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968) 36.

10 W. Goodenough, "Rethinking Status and Role. Toward a General Model of the Cultural Organization of Social Relationships," The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology, ed. M. Banton (A.S.A. Monographs, Vol 1) (London: Tavistock, 1965) 3.

11 R. Keesing, "Toward a Model of Role Analysis," A Handbook of Method in Cultural Anthropology, ed. R. Naroll & R. Cohen (New York: Natural History Press, 1971) 427.

12 S. Nadel, The Theory of Social Structure (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1957) 1.

13 N. Gottwald, The Tribes of Yahweh. A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979) and R. Carroll, When Prophecy Failed. Cognitive Dissonance in the Prophetic Traditions of the Old Testament (New York: Seabury, 1979).

14 R. Merton, "The Role Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," BJS 8 (1957) 108.

15 B. Long, "The Social Setting for Prophetic Miracle Stories," Semeia 3 (1975) 46-63; "Recent Field Studies in Oral Literature and the Question of Sitz im Leben," Semeia 5 (1976) 35-49; "Prophetic Authority."

16 T. Overholt, "The Ghost Dance of 1980 and the Nature of the Prophetic Process," Ethnohistory 21 (1974) 37-61; "Jeremiah and the Nature of the Prophetic Process," Scripture in History and Theology. Essays in Honor of J. Coert Rylaarsdam, ed. T. Overholt & A. Merrill (Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1977) 129-150; "Commanding the Prophets: Amos and the Problem of Prophetic Authority," CBQ 41 (1979) 517-532.

17 Wilson, Prophecy and Society.

18 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 492.

19 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 493.



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

- 20 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 493.
- 21 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 495.
- 22 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 495.
- 23 So Merton, "The Role Set."
- 24 B. Duhm, Das Buch Jesaja (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982).
- 25 For a discussion of Duhm's significance, see H.-J. Kraus, Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testament (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969) 275-283; R. Clements, One Hundred Years of Old Testament Interpretation (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976) 52-56.
- 26 H. Gunkel, "Die geheimen Erfahrungen der Propheten Israels," Suchen der Zeit 1 (1903) II/2-153. This essay was revised and published in Die Schriften des Alten Testaments, Vol II/2, ed. H. Schmidt (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1915). For analysis of this material, see Kraus, Geschichte 360-362; Clements, One Hundred Years 59-61; R. Wilson, Prophecy and Society 7.
- 27 G. Hölscher, Die Profeten. Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte Israels (Leipzig: J. Hinrichs, 1914).
- 28 For brief assessments of post-Hölscher work in this regard, see Wilson, Prophecy and Society 5-8; Kraus, Geschichte 472-473.
- 29 J. Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1962); A. Heschel, The Prophets (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962). G. Widengren's work on the "parapsychic experience of the prophets" is, for the most part, a continuation of Hölscher's and Lindblom's insights, so his Literary and Psychological Aspects of Hebrew Prophets, UUA 10 (1948) 94-120.
- 30 Lindblom, Prophecy 46.
- 31 Lindblom, Prophecy 35.
- 32 Lindblom, Prophecy 310.
- 33 Lindblom, Prophecy 98.
- 34 I. Lewis, Ecstatic Religion. An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971) 24.
- 35 A. Heschel, The Prophet, Vol 2, 124ff. In not dissimilar fashion, I. Seierstad denied the presence of ecstasy among Israel's prophets and maintained that their experience of revelation constituted a "heightened consciousness" rather than an ecstatic loss of consciousness; Seierstad, Die Offenbarungserlebnisse der Propheten Amos, Jesaja, und Jeremia. Eine

Untersuchung der Erlebnisvorgänge unter besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer religiös-sittlichen Art und Auswirkung (Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1946).

36 Heschel, The Prophets, Vol 2, 11.

37 Heschel, The Prophets, Vol 1, 26.

38 R. Wilson, "Prophecy and Ecstasy: A Reexamination," JBL 98 (1979) 324.

39 Wilson, "Prophecy and Ecstasy" 336-337.

40 Wilson, "Prophecy and Ecstasy" 337. Wilson builds a great deal on the observation that possession behavior may be stereotypic. For example, he suggests that the stereotypic language present in the book of Jeremiah reflects Jeremiah's behavior (Prophecy and Society 303). Such a contention is tantamount to asserting that any stereotypic or conventional language may be adduced as evidence of spirit possession, an inference which is unwarranted. Though possession language and behavior may be stereotypic, not all stereotypic language and behavior derive from possession behavior.

41 Some recent treatments of this question do not advance the discussion. H.-C. Schmitt reasserts Canaanite ecstasy as the source of Israelite prophecy. His thesis is difficult to sustain because he overemphasizes the Wen-Amun narrative, he underemphasizes the Mari texts, and he overlooks the Zakir inscription. Further he fails to apply higher critical methods to the texts he studies, e.g., 1 Samuel 10; 15; "Prophetie und Tradition. Beobachtungen zur Frühgeschichte des israelitische Nabitums," ZTK 24 (1977) 255-272.

42 Wilson, "Prophecy and Ecstasy" 330.

43 S. Parker, "Possession trance and prophecy in pre-exilic Israel," VT 28 (1978) 281.

44 So D. Hillers, "A Convention in Hebrew Literature: The Reaction to Bad News," ZAW 77 (1965) 86-90, and Parker, "Possession Trance" 281-282. Cf. Wilson who maintains that Jeremiah 23:9 is an example of ecstatic activity, Prophecy and Society 7.

45 Parker, "Possession trance" 285.

46 In adducing the following examples, I make no claims for the historicity of the texts. Since these examples are fully consistent with what we know about Israel's prophets, there is no reason to question the range of behavior represented in the material adduced here.

47 W. Zimmerli, Ezekiel 1 (Hermeneia) (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) 161-163.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

- 48 Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel 122ff.  
49 J. Roberts, "The Hand of Yahweh," VT 21 (1971) 246.  
50 Roberts, "The Hand of Yahweh" 251.  
51 Parker, "Possession Trance and Prophecy" 281-285.

### Notes to Chapter Three ROLE LABELS: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS, THE LABELS rō'eh AND 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm

- 1 So, for example, Keesing, "Toward a Model of Role Analysis."  
2 Keesing, "Toward a Model of Role Analysis" 425.  
3 Keesing, "Toward a Model of Role Analysis" 425.  
4 For recent treatments of this literature and the titles which appear in them, see conveniently, W. Moran, "New Evidence from Mari on the History of Prophecy," Bib 50 (1969) 15-56; Huffmon, "Prophecy in the Mari Letters"; "The Origins of Prophecy," Magnalia Dei 171-186; Wilson, Prophecy and Society 98-124; J. Renger, "Untersuchungen zur Priestertum der altbabylonischen Zeit. 2. Teil," ZA 25 (1969) 201-230.  
5 Huffmon, "Prophecy in the Mari Letters," The Biblical Archaeologist Reader, Vol 3, ed. E. Campbell & D. Freedman (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1970) 211.  
6 Wilson, Prophecy and Society 110.  
7 Wilson, Prophecy and Society 119.  
8 See, for example, R. Rendtorff, "nābî' in the Old Testament," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol 6, ed. G. Kittel (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968) 810, "The fact that the terms rō'eh and hōzeh occur in the tradition as well as nābî' shows that in Israel prophecy was adopted in different forms from without"; Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel 94, "The prophet may occasionally use the methods and do the work of a seer ... The old-fashioned seer gradually gave way to the prophets"; D. Vetter, "hzh," THAT, Vol 1, 535. Cf. A. Jepsen, Nābî'. Soziologische Studien zur alttestamentlichen Literatur und Religionsgeschichte (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1934) 5-10, 43-55; H. Junker, Prophet und Seher in Israel. Eine Untersuchung über die ältesten Erscheinungen des israelitischen Prophetentums insbesondere der Prophetenvereine (Trier: Paulinus Verlag, 1927).  
9 There have been numerous surveys of the prophetic

titles. Apart from those mentioned in note 8, one may cite especially M. Jastrow, "Rō'eh and Hōzeh in the Old Testament," JBL 28 (1909) 42-56; M. van den Oudenrijn, "De vocabulis quibusdam, termino nābî' synonymis," Bib 6 (1925) 294-311, 406-417; H. Orlinsky, "The Seer-Priest," The World History of the Jewish People, First Series: Ancient Times, Vol. III: Judges, ed. B. Mazar (Jerusalem: Jerusalem History Publications, 1971) 268-279, 342-344; Wilson, Prophecy and Society 136-141, 254-257.

One could argue that more prophetic titles are present, e.g., mal'āk Yahweh and Cebed (Yahweh). I am inclined to understand these phrases, when applied to prophetic activity, to be more the product of systematic reflection than actual role labels in Israelite society.

I should make clear that I do not claim that each of the four prophetic role labels refer, innately, to a specific role. Rather the word tends to be used regularly to refer to a role; i.e., hā'ēlōhîm (hā) could be used to describe a central morality prophet, or a nābî' a peripheral prophet.

10 So C. Hauer, "Does 1 Samuel 9:1-11:15 reflect the Extension of Saul's Dominions?," JBL 86 (1967) 306-310; H. Hertzberg, I & II Samuel (OTL) (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964) 78-86; J. Miller, "Saul's Rise to Power: Some Observations Concerning 1 Samuel 9:1-10:16; 10:26-11:15 and 13:2-14:46," CBQ 36 (1974) 157-174; L. Schmidt, Menschlicher Erfolg und Jahwes Initiative: Studien zu Tradition, Interpretation und Historie in Überlieferungen von Gideon, Saul und David (WMANT 38) (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970) 58-102.

11 B. Birch, "The Development of the Tradition on the Anointing of Saul in 1 Samuel 9:1-10:16," JBL 90 (1971) 55-68. I follow Miller, "Saul's Rise to Power," in thinking that the seer was, in the folk tale, anonymous.

12 On the general category holy man, see G. van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation (New York: Harper & Row, 1963) 191-241. For a discussion of the holy man in another historical context, see P. Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," JRS 61 (1971) 80-101.

13 For a discussion of an early dating for Chronicles, see D. Petersen, Late Israelite Prophecy: Studies in Deutero-Prophetic Literature and in Chronicles (SBLMS 23) (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977) 58-60.

14 So N. Bratsiotis, "hā'ēlōhîm," TWAT, Vol 1, 250-252; J. Holstein, "The Case of 'hā'ēlōhîm' Reconsidered: Philological

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Analysis versus Historical Reconstruction," HUCA 48 (1977) 69-81. Cf. the earlier studies; M. van den Oudenrijn, "L'expression, 'fils des prophètes' et ses analogies," Bib 6 (1925) 165-171; R. Hallevy, "Man of God," JNES 17 (1958) 237-244.

15 Another problem with Holstein's case is his contention that the title is never used on the lips of a person so labelled. In 2 Kings 1:9-10, Elijah does use the title of himself. Holstein's claim that such usage is ironic does not square with recent discussions of irony in the Hebrew Bible; see E. Good, Irony in the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965).

16 On the difficult issue of the way in which Elijah was perceived as a Mosaic prophet, see especially R. Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas. Some Remarks on Prophetic Succession in Ancient Israel," VT 19 (1969) 400-413; Wilson, Prophecy and Society 197-200.

17 A. Rofé, "The Classification of the Prophetical Stories," JBL 89 (1970) 429-430; cf. B. Long, "2 Kings III and genres of prophetic narrative," VT 23 (1973) 337-348.

18 In the Elisha and Elijah narratives, one ought to translate 'îš (hā)'ēlōhîm not man of God, but holy man. Cf. Genesis 1:2 rūah 'ēlōhîm as holy or sacral wind; Job 1:16 'ēs 'ēlōhîm as holy fire; Psalms 68:16 har 'ēlōhîm as divine mountain.

19 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion, passim. Wilson has also used Lewis' categories of peripheral and central possession. However, Wilson's use of these categories focuses almost exclusively on the issue of whether or not the prophet is related to the central political and religious establishment, so the discussion of Jeremiah as a peripheral prophet, pp.241-242. Wilson, therefore, appropriates Lewis' categories without utilizing the full range of criteria, e.g., the moral versus amoral character of the deity venerated by the prophet, which this typology entails in Lewis' own work.

20 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 18.

21 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 49.

22 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 101.

23 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 31.

24 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 120.

25 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 93.

26 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 96.

27 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 71.

28 See M. Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion (New York: Meridian Books, 1963) 14-19; R. Otto, The Idea of the Holy (New York: Oxford University, 1958) 13-19.

## Notes to Chapter Four

29 For a discussion of the prophetic father, see P. Joüon, "Qu'étaient les 'fils des prophètes'," RSR 16 (1926) 307-312; J. Williams, "The Prophetic 'Father.' A Brief Explanation of the Term 'Sons of the Prophets'," JBL 85 (1966) 344-348; Wilson, Prophecy and Society 171.

## Notes to Chapter Four

### TWO ROLE LABELS--hōzeh AND nābî'--AND ONE ROLE

1 H. Fuhs, Sehen und Schauen. Die Wurzel hzh im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament. Ein Beitrag zum prophetischen Offenbarungsempfang (Forschung zur Bibel 32) (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1978) 220.

2 Fuhs, Sehen und Schauen 193.

3 On the significance of these prophetic titles as applied to the Levitical singers, see D. Petersen, Late Israelite Prophecy 55-87.

4 MT reads kol nēbî'ēw kol hōzeh. One should follow S and TL and read kol nābî' wēkol hōzeh.

5 Jepsen (hzh, TWAT, Vol II, 829) argues that it is unwise to build too much on 2 Samuel 24:11b since the Chronicler has inserted hzy into the Samuel text. Such a view is unacceptable because it fails to explain the reason for the application of the title to Gad in Chronicles.

6 H. Huffmon, "The Origins of Prophecy" 180; cf. S. Paul "Prophets and Prophecy," EJ, Vol 13, 1155.

7 This passage contains three unsolved problems: 1) Why is Micah 3:6a in the second person whereas all the rest of the oracle is in the third person? 2) How does one explain the syntax of wē'ûlām in 3:8? 3) Is 'et rūah yhwh, which is extrametrical and not present in Symm. and in some Hebrew manuscripts, to be omitted? See the commentaries of Mays, Rudolph, Weiser, van der Woude, and Fuhs, Sehen und Schauen 207-210.

8 So D. Petersen, "Isaiah 28, A Redaction Critical Study," SBLSP 1979, ed. by P. Achtemeier (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979) 121.

9 For example, O. Kaiser, Isaiah 13-39 (OTL) (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974) 269. Cf. Fuhs, Sehen und Schauen 211-214.

10 Fuhs, Sehen und Schauen 213-214.

11 My translation from the German. Cf. the Hermeneia

translation: H. Wolff, Joel and Amos (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977) 313.

12 The verb nābî, in both niphāl and hithpael forms, is used to describe general prophetic activity, not just the behavior of a nābî. See H. Wolff, Joel and Amos 313. Cf. J. Jeremias, "nābî," THAT, Vol II, 16-17; Rendtorff, "nābî" in the Old Testament" 797-799 on the niphāl-hithpael distinction. On Amos as a southern prophet, see S. Wagner, "Überlegungen zur Frage nach den Beziehungen des Propheten Amos zum Südreich," TLZ 96 (1971) 653-670.

13 For recent treatments of Amos 7:10-17, see especially Wolff, Joel and Amos 306-316; J. Mays, Amos, a Commentary (OTL) (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969) 133-140; G. Tucker, "Prophetic Authenticity: A Form-Critical Study of Amos 7:10-17," Interp 27 (1973) 423-435; P. Ackroyd, "A Judgment Narrative between Kings and Chronicles? An Approach to Amos 7:9-17," Canon and Authority 71-87; Fuhs, Sehen und Schauen 187-192; Z. Zevit, "A Misunderstanding at Bethel, Amos 7:12-17," VT 25 (1975) 783-790, an article which remains valuable despite the response of Y. Hoffmann, "Did Amos regard himself as a nābî?" VT 27 (1977) 209-212. Wolff understands a nābî or ben nābî to be an Amisprophet, not one freely called by Yahweh. This analysis, however, fails to explain the significance of the term hōzeh—why Amaziah used it and why Amos did not deny it. Wolff does admit that the terms nābî and hōzeh are not interchangeable. Zevit, too, recognizes that hōzeh and nābî are not identical, and that the hōzeh is often associated with Judah. Hence Zevit properly contends that Amaziah's attack on Amos as hōzeh was made because he thought Amos to be patronized by the Judahite king. Zevit then takes Amos' response to be "No, I am not a prophet enjoying royal patronage (i.e., a hōzeh); I am an independent prophet—my own man; nor am I a disciple of any prophet working under his aegis and doing his bidding." In opposition to Zevit's interpretation, one need only note that Amos does not deny being a hōzeh; he only denies that, as hōzeh, he is limited to Judah. Amos, as hōzeh, was no more under the king's thumb than had been Gad as hōzeh.

14 On the complexities of this topic, see O. Kaiser, Isaiah 13-39 367-368; B. Childs, Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis (SBT, 2nd Series, 3) (London: SCM, 1967).

15 See the standard commentaries.

16 M. Goshen-Gottstein, "Hebrew Syntax and the History of

## Notes to Chapter Four

the Hebrew Text," Textus 8 (1973) 100-106.

17 Cf. Wolff, Joel and Amos 181-187.

18 Wolff, Joel and Amos 170-171 maintains that this is dtr. instructional material; see similarly W. Schmidt, "Die deuteronomistische Redaktion des Amosbuches," ZAW 77 (1965) 183-188; cf. I. Willi-Plein, Vorformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments (BZAW 123) (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971) 22.

19 H. Wolff, Hosea (Hermeneia) (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974) 70-71.

20 Here following LXX.

21 To be sure, texts such as Micah 2:9-12 and Isaiah 3:1-3 demonstrate that the title nābî could be used to label prophetic figures in Judah.

22 The primary reason that the hōzeh-nābî distinction has not been perceived earlier lies in the confluence of the northern and southern traditions in Judah after the defeat of Israel in 721 B.C.E. Steck describes this process as follows: "The reception of the prophetic traditions (including Hosea's) from the northern kingdom, the appropriation of the traditions about the judges, Samuel, and Saul, and especially the incorporation of the Elohistic narrative into the Yahwist (the latter having arisen and survived in the countryside of Judah) are the significant components in this Judean process of activating Israel's early historical traditions and the Israelite self-understanding connected with these traditions"; O. Steck, "Theological Streams of Tradition," Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament, ed. D. Knight (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977) 204. This merging and subsequent homogenization of prophetic titles and traditions has created a picture of prophetic activity which obscures the distinctions which I have attempted to articulate in this study. Given the demise of the northern society and the resulting cultural admixture in the South, it is surprising that the northern traditions appear in such a pronounced way in the book of Jeremiah, over a century after the end of the northern state.

23 See chapter five for a discussion of role rationale. It is important to state that the two basic forms--peripheral and central morality religion--"should be seen as opposite extremes on a single continuum, rather than as completely different types of religion" (Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 144). The vagaries of political and social circumstance can cause a particular religion to move from central to peripheral and to central



## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

status again--as is the case with Zezuru Shona tribal religion of Zimbabwe.

24 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 150-155.

25 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 152.

26 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 137.

27 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 137.

28 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 170.

29 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 156-157.

30 Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 148.

31 Two recent studies of Israelite prophecy make this same basic point: classical prophets functioned in a context of international crisis, so Carroll, When Prophecy Failed 8-9; Overholt, "Commanding the Prophets" 527.

32 On this general issue, see recently J. Crenshaw, Prophetic Conflict: Its Effect upon Israelite Religion (BZAW 124) (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971); J. Sanders, "Hermeneutics in True and False Prophecy," Canon and Authority 21-41.

### Notes to Chapter Five

#### ROLE RATIONALE:

#### DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE hōzeh AND THE nābî

1 H. Orlinsky hinted at, but did not pursue, a similar approach, "The Seer in Ancient Israel," Or Ant 4 (1965) 172. Cf. his more recent "The Seer-Priest" 268-279, 342-344.

In an earlier study ("The Oracles against the Nations. A Form-Critical Analysis, SBLSP 1975, Vol 1, ed. G. MacRae [Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975] 56), I argued for this fundamental hōzeh-nābî distinction. Cf. also J. Lust, "The Mantic Function of the Prophet," Bijdragen 34 (1973) 249-250 for another version of this distinction. More recently, H. Huffmon, "The Origins of Prophecy," has argued for the existence of a hōzeh-nābî typology. He associates the hōzeh type with Gad and the Levitical singers in Chronicles, who are, like Gad, called hōzeh and nābî. Elsewhere (Late Israelite Prophecy 55-87), I have contended that such an association misunderstands the claims for the prophetic status of these singers. Rather than being evidence for pre-exilic cultic prophecy, descriptions of the singers as prophets are part of post-exilic developments concerning the status of the Asaphites

## Notes to Chapter Five

and Korachites. As for Huffmon's nābî' type, see below. Wilson's thesis for an Ephraimite and a Judahite prophetic tradition (Prophecy and Society 135-295) is closely akin to the distinction presented here.

2 These two categories are something like Weber's ideal types. Though they rarely occur in pure form, they allow us to perceive something about the phenomena which would otherwise remain unobserved. One important reason why the types are not always pure is that the traditions out of which these types were formulated comprise the common heritage of Israel in the pre-national period. If one may follow Cross (Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic [Cambridge: Harvard University, 1973] 44-75) and conceive the patriarchal narratives, and presumably period, as one during which the El conception was important in Israel, then the idea of El's divine council and its heralds was part of that early heritage. Similarly, the idea of treaty and its attendant traditions was a part of the political environment along the entire eastern Mediterranean coast—from Anatolia to Egypt—from at least the fourteenth century B.C.E. This conception, too, was available for use by both northern and southern societies. Hence, for example, mention of the divine council in a northern context, e.g., Deuteronomy 32:1, is not unexpected. What is unexpected is the consistency with which the two societies articulated their respective views of the central prophet's role.

With the demise of the northern nation in 721 B.C.E. and with the presumed influx into Judah of some northern Yahwists, the two types had little chance to remain discrete. Interestingly, the hōzeh paradigm predominates in Ezekiel whereas the nābî' type predominates in Jeremiah. See chapter four, note 22, on this basic issue.

3 So W. Albright, Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan (London: Athlone, 1968) 181.

4 Jeremias, "nābî'", THAT, Vol II, 7.

5 So H. Torczyner, "Das literarische Problem der Bibel," ZDMG 85 (1931) 322.

6 Jepsen, "hzh," TWAT, Vol I, 823 and Vetter, "hzh," THAT, Vol II, 533. The Zinjirli inscription as evidence for a Phoenician attestation is ambiguous since that inscription contains at least one Aramaism. Ugaritic hdy is problematic, cf. M. Dahood, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Lexicography II," Bib 45 (1964) 407-408; H. Ginsberg, "Lexicographic Notes," VTSupp 16 (1967) 71-73.

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

- 7 As an early and classical statement, see A. Alt, "Die Heimat des Deuteronomiums," Kleine Schriften, Vol II (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1964) 250-275.
- 8 So F. Cross and D. Freedman, Early Hebrew Orthography. A Study of the Epigraphic Evidence (AOS 36) (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1952) 57.
- 9 W. Rudolph, Hosea (KAT XIII, 1) (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1966) 20-22.
- 10 H. Ginsberg, "Hosea," EJ, Vol 8, 1015.
- 11 See the standard histories and B. Halpern, "Sectionalism and the Schism," JBL 93 (1974) 519-532.
- 12 On Jeroboam's use of the bull imagery in the northern cultus, see Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic 73-75.
- 13 On the northern or Mushite priesthood, see Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic 199ff.
- 14 Despite recent probing questions about source critical formulations, this hypothesis still best accounts for the formation of early Israelite narrative traditions.
- 15 See P. Ellis, The Yahwist. The Bible's First Theologian with the Jerusalem Bible Text of the Yahwist Saga (Notre Dame, IN: Fides, 1968); J. Soggin, Introduction to the Old Testament (OTL) (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976) 99-103; Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic 261-263; M. Noth, The History of Israel (New York: Harper and Row, 1958) 220.
- 16 See, beyond the standard introductions, Wolff and Jenks for a description of the essential features of the Elohist narrative; H. Wolff, "The Elohist Fragments in the Pentateuch," Interp 26 (1972) 158-173; A. Jenks, The Elohist and North Israelite Traditions (SBLMS 22) (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977) 19-82.
- 17 So D. Baly, The Geography of the Bible; a study in historical geography (New York: Harper, 1957) 86; Geographical Companion to the Bible (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963) 60-77.
- 18 For a discussion of the relative utility of wheat and barley and of the kinds of wheat grown in Syria-Palestine, see N. Jasny, The Wheats of Classical Antiquity (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1944) 142, 148-149. I am indebted to Jack Harlan for this reference.
- 19 Part of the olive oil was probably the Judahite contribution to the payment. Cf. the expanded list in 2 Chronicles 2:10.
- 20 See J. Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) Plate VI, and D. Baly, Geographical Companion

## Notes to Chapter Five

to the Bible Plate V.

21 So B. Peckham, "Israel and Phoenicia," The Mighty Acts of God 224-248; and S. Moscati, The World of the Phoenicians (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968) 82.

22 G. Barrois, "Trade and Commerce," IDB, Vol 4, 680.

23 T. McClellan, "Towns to Fortresses: The Transformation of Urban Life in Judah from the 8th to 7th Centuries," SBLSP 1978, Vol 1, ed. P. Achtemeier (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978) 279.

24 Ibid.

25 J. Gibson, Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions, Vol 1. Hebrew and Moabite Inscriptions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) 45.

26 On the Zakir inscription and its importance for the discussion of prophetic activity, see conveniently J. Ross, "Prophecy in Hamath, Israel, and Mari," HTR 63 (1970) 1-28.

27 So J. Hoftijzer & G. van der Kooij, eds., Aramaic Texts from Deir 'Alla (Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui 29) (Leiden: Brill, 1976) 173, 179, Plate 1.

28 N. Habel, "The Form and Significance of the Call Narrative," ZAW 77 (1965) 297-323.

29 B. Long, "Prophetic Authority as Social Reality."

30 So Cross & Freedman, Early Hebrew Orthography 65-66. Cf. P. Kahle, The Cairo Genizah (Oxford: Blackwell, 1959) 171-179; and A. Sperber, A Historical Grammar of Biblical Hebrew (Leiden: Brill, 1966) 265.

31 W. Zimmerli, Ezekiel (Hermeneia) (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) 97-100.

32 On the nonprophetic "call" narratives, see W. Richter, Die sogenannte vorprophetischen Berufungsberichte (FRLANT 101) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), and B. Long, "Prophetic Call Traditions and Reports of Visions," ZAW 84 (1972) 496-500.

33 F. Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," JNES 12 (1953) 275.

34 F. Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic 189, 190 n.187; cf. P. Miller, "The Divine Council and the Prophetic Call to War," VT 18 (1968) 100-107.

35 J. Holladay, "Assyrian Statecraft and the Prophets of Israel," HTR 63 (1970) 31.

36 Holladay, "Assyrian Statecraft" 34.

37 G. Wright's thesis about the political character of prophecy has been seminal in these discussions, e.g., "The

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

prophet was an official of the divine government of Israel," in his "The Lawsuit of God: A Form-Critical Study of Deuteronomy 32," Israel's Prophetic Heritage, ed. B. Anderson & W. Harrelson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 63 n.68.

38 K. Baltzer's conception of the prophet as vizier for the divine king is also an important attempt to describe the theopolitical function of the prophets ("Considerations Regarding the Office and Calling of the Prophet," HTR 61 [1968] 567-581). However, his contention that the prophet had an office more important than that of the Israelite king improperly devalues that role both in Israel and throughout the ancient Near East.

39 E. Würthwein, "Zur Komposition von I Reg 22:1-38," Das Ferne und Nahe Wort. Festschrift für Leonard Rost, ed. F. Maass (Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1967) 245-254.

40 Cf. Wilson (Prophecy and Society 208-212) who interprets Micaiah as peripheral, one who resorts to witchcraft accusations. See for a different view of witchcraft within the social setting, Lewis, Ecstatic Religion 118-122. Cf. S. DeVries, Prophet against Prophet. The Role of the Micaiah Narrative (1 Kgs 22) in the Development of Early Prophetic Tradition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), for a much different assessment of this narrative's growth.

41 On the traditions about Moses as prophet, see L. Perlitt, "Moses als Prophet," EvT 31 (1971) 588-608; J. Blenkinsopp, Prophecy and Canon. A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1977) 35-53, 80-95. Blenkinsopp gives the impression that this conception had no significant competition. See also Wilson, Prophecy and Society 157-166, for a discussion of the deuteronomic conception of Moses as a prophet. Wilson makes a strong case for the existence of an Ephraimite prophetic tradition in which the Mosaic paradigm achieves normative prophetic status.

42 Muilenburg, "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel" 83.

43 Muilenburg, "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel" 75-76.

44 Muilenburg, "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel" 91.

45 Muilenburg, "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel" 95-97.

46 See, for example, H. Reventlow, "Prophetenamt und

Mittleramt"; H.-J. Kraus, Die prophetische Verkündigung des Rechts in Israel (TS 51) (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1957); and the recent critique of R. Clements, Prophecy and Tradition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975) 9-14.

47 So Blenkinsopp, Prophecy and Canon 39-53.

48 H. Huffmon, "The Origins of Prophecy" 180. Whether Nathan, the only Judahite prophet on Huffmon's list of the nābî' type, really belongs there is questionable. I am more inclined to accept the view of A. Johnson: "... inasmuch as the term nābî' received an extension of meaning, it may well be that Nathan, like Gad, was not a nābî' of the early type, but rather a hōzeh or seer ..." (The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel [Cardiff: University of Wales, 1962] 26 n.2).

49 See H. Wolff, "Hoseas geistige Heimat," Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament (TB 22) (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1964) 232-250.

50 Muilenburg noted this similarity: "His (Hosea's) attitude to the establishment of the kingdom is close to that of the law of the king in Deuteronomy and to that of the tradition associated with Samuel," "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel" 94. See also Jenks, The Elohists and North Israelite Traditions 116. Cf. on Hosea's response to the monarchy, A. Gelston, "Kingship in the Book of Hosea," OTS 19 (1974) 71-85.

51 Although Clements' objections to the "covenant mediator" thesis of Kraus are well taken, his rejection of the relevance of the treaty or covenant for an understanding of both the form and the substance of much in classical prophetic literature is difficult to sustain, Prophecy and Tradition 9-23.

52 T. Ishida, The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel: a Study of the Formation and Development of Royal-Dynastic Ideology (BZAW 142) (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1977) 174-176; so similarly Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic 230.

53 Muilenburg, "The 'Office' of the Prophet" 97.

54 Jepsen "hzh," TWAT, Vol II, 827, 834. See also Fuhs, Sehen und Schauen 249.

55 G. Wright, "The Nations in Hebrew Prophecy," Encounter 26 (1965) 235-237. See also Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic 228-229, 345 n.5.

56 P. Berger & T. Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge (London: Penguin-Allen Lane, 1966) 79. The author's sense of institution here is probably best understood to mean social order, see 221

## The Roles of Israel's Prophets

n.2.

57 Berger & Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality  
112.

58 It should be said that this rudimentary form was probably sufficient for many people in the society. So Berger, "... since human beings are frequently stupid, institutional meanings tend to become simplified," The Social Construction of Reality 87.

59 Berger & Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality  
117.

60 Berger & Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality  
121.

### Notes to Chapter Six THE STUDY OF PROPHETIC ROLES: FURTHER ISSUES

1 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 514.

2 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 517.

3 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 516.

4 See Heschel's contention that the prophet was a homo sympathetikos, The Prophets, Vol 1, 87-103.

5 D. Freedman, "Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy. An Essay on Biblical Poetry," JBL 96 (1977) 21.

6 On the character of prophetic speech and speech forms, see C. Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967); K. Koch, The Growth of the Biblical Tradition. The Form-Critical Method (New York: Scribner, 1969) 183-220; W. March, "Prophecy," Old Testament Form Criticism, ed. J. Hayes (TUMSR 2) (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1974) 141-177; Wilson, Prophecy and Society 141-143.

7 G. Tucker, "Prophetic Speech," Interp 32 (1978) 31-45.

8 On the oracles against the nations as a whole, see J. Hayes, "The Usage of Oracles against Foreign Nations in Ancient Israel," JBL 87 (1968) 81-92; D. Christensen, Transformations of the War Oracle in Old Testament Prophecy: Studies in the War Oracles against the Nations (HDR 3) (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975); Y. Hoffmann, The Prophecies against Foreign Nations in the Bible (hebr) (Tel Aviv: The Chaim Rosenberg School for Jewish Studies--Tel Aviv University, 1977).

9 On Ezekiel 20, see Zimmerli, Ezekiel 404-418.

## Notes to Chapter Six

- 10 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 497.
- 11 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 501.
- 12 There were surely other role expectations, for example, that the prophet should not report words of destruction to his own society.
- 13 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 540.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 See R. Carroll, When Prophecy Failed, for a discussion of a closely related phenomenon, cognitive dissonance.
- 16 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 541.
- 17 Sarbin, "Role Theory" 543-544.



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# INDEX OF MODERN AUTHORS

Abel, F.	120	Dahrendorf, R.	18,19,103
Achtemeier, P.	109,115,122	DeVries, S.	116
Ackroyd, P.	110	Duhm, B.	25,26,104,121
Albright, W.	113		
Allen, V.	102,124	Eisenstadt, S.	100
Alt, A.	113-114,120	Eliade, M.	108
Anderson, B.	116,124	Ellis, P.	114
Aronson, E.	102,124	Emerton, J.	102
		Emmett, D.	11,101,121
Baltzer, K.	100,116,120	Erikson, E.	101
Baly, D.	114,120		
Banton, M.	102,103,121	Freedman, D.	71,91,106,114, 115,118,120, 121,122
Barrois, G.	115	Friedland, W.	101
Berger, P.	87,88,100,117, 118,120	Fuhs, H.	52,55,109,110, 117,121
Birch, B.	38,107,120		
Blenkinsopp, J.	84,116,117,120	Gelston, A.	117
Bratsiotis, N.	107	Gibson, J.	75,115
Bright, J.	114	Ginsberg, H.	72,113,114
Brown, P.	107	Good, E.	108
Buss, M.	102	Good, W.	102
		Goodenough, W.	18,19,103,121
Calvin, J.	12	Goshen-Gottstein, M.	60,110
Camic, C.	101	Gottwald, N.	19,103
Campbell, E.	106,122	Gross, H.	100,121
Carroll, R.	19,20,103,108, 112,119,120	Gunkel, H.	25,26,104,121
Childs, B.	110		
Christensen, D.	118	Habel, N.	76,79,115,121
Clements, R.	28,104,117,120	Hallevy, R.	108
Coats, G.	100,122	Halpern, B.	114,121
Cohen, R.	103,122	Harlan, J.	114
Crenshaw, J.	112	Harrelson, W.	116,124
Cross, F.	71,80,86,101, 113,114,115, 117,120,122	Hauer, C.	107
		Hayes, J.	118
Dahood, M.	113	Herskovits, M.	24
		Hertzberg, H.	107

# The Roles of Israel's Prophets

Heschel, A.	26,27,28,29, 30,104,105, 118,121	Lewis, I.	27,43,44,45, 46,47,49,50, 64,65,66,87, 98,99,104,108, 111,112,116, 122
Hillers, D.	105,121		
Hoffmann, Y.	110,118		
Hoftijzer, J.	115,121		
Holladay, J.	80,115,121	Lindblom, J.	26,27,28,29, 30,32,104, 105,106,122
Hölscher, G.	26,27,29,30, 104,122		
Hölstein, J.	40,107,108	Lindzey, G.	102,124
Huffman, H.	37,53,84,106, 109,112,117, 122	Linton, R.	17,18,19,103
		Long, B.	20,76,100,103, 108,115,122
Hughes, J.	102	Luckmann, T.	117,118,120
Hyatt, J.	100,123	Lust, J.	112
		Luther, M.	11
Ishida, T.	85,117		
		McBride, S. Dean	77,122
Jasny, N.	114,122	McClellan, T.	115,122
Jastrow, M.	107,122	MacRae, G.	112
Jauck, A.	101	Maass, F.	116,124
Jenks, A.	114,117,122	Malamat, A.	101
Jepsen, A.	86,106,109, 113,117,122	March, W.	118
		Mays, J.	109,110
Jeremias, J.	71,110,113	Mazar, B.	107,123
Johnson, A.	117	Merrill, A.	103
Johnson, H.	101-101,123	Merton, R.	19,20,103,104, 123
Joüon, P.	71,108-109		
Junker, H.	106	Miller, J.	107
		Miller, P.	101,115
Kahle, P.	115	Moran, W.	106
Kaiser, O.	109,110	Moscatti, S.	115
Keesing, R.	18,19,35,36, 103,106,122	Muilenburg, J.	79,82,83,85, 100,116,117, 123
Kittel, G.	106,123		
Knight, D.	111,124		
Koch, K.	118	Nadel, S.	19,103
Kooij, G. van der	115,121	Naroll, R.	103
Kraus, H.-J.	104,116-117	Neiman, L.	102
		Noth, M.	12,13,14,100, 101,114,123
Labat, R.	32		
Leeuw, G. van der	107	Nyberg, H.	72
Lemke, W.	101		

# Index of Modern Authors

Orlinsky, H.	107,112,123	Theissen, G.	102
Otto, R.	108	Torczyner, H.	75,113
Oudenrijn, M. van den	107,108	Tucker, G.	91,110,118,124
Overholt, T.	20,103,112,123	Turner, V.	17,102
Parker, S.	29,30,33,105, 106,123	Vetter, D.	106,113
Parsons, T.	17,102,103,123	Wagner, S.	110
Paul, S.	109	Weber, M.	9,10,11,12,13, 14,98,100, 101,113,124
Peckham, B.	115	Weiser, A.	109
Perlitt, L.	116	Westermann, C.	118
Petersen, D.	100,107,109, 112,123	Widengren, G.	104
Popitz, H.	102-103	Williams, J.	100,109
Rendtorff, R.	106,110,123	Willi-Plein, I.	111
Renger, J.	106	Wilson, R.	20,28,29,37, 101,102,103, 104,105,106, 107,108,109, 113,116,118, 124
Reventlow, H.	100,116	Wittich, C.	101,124
Richter, W.	115	Wolff, H.	56,61,62,84, 109,110,111, 114,117,124
Roberts, J.	32,33,106,123	Woude, A. van der	109
Rofé, A.	42,108,123	Wright, G.	115-116,117, 124
Ross, J.	75,115,123	Würthwein, E.	81,82,116,124
Roth, G.	101,124	Zevit, Z.	110,124
Rowton, M.	102	Zimmerli, W.	79,105,115,118
Rudolph, W.	72,109,114		
Sanders, J.	112		
Sarbin, T.	21,23,24,96, 98,102,103, 104,118,119, 124		
Schmidt, H.	104		
Schmidt, L.	107		
Schmidt, W.	61,111		
Schmitt, H.-C.	105		
Schütz, J.	100		
Seierstad, I.	104-105		
Shils, E.	103		
Soggin, J.	114		
Sperber, A.	115		
Steck, O.	111,124		
Sunden, H.	102		



# INDEX OF BIBLICAL PASSAGES

Genesis		9:18	38
1:2	108	9:19	38
15:18	73	9:21	38,98
		10	105
Exodus		10:1	38,98
9:15	32	10:3-4	38,98
10:7	43	10:26-11:15	107
11:4-12:36	46	13:2-14:46	107
20:19	46	15	105
30:13	39		
		2 Samuel	
Deuteronomy		6	46
17:14-20	84	12	31
18:15ff.	78,83-84	24:11	52,53
18:18	86	24:11b	109
18:22	76		
32	116,124	1 Kings	
32:1	113	5:25	74
33:1	41,43	12:22	41
		13:1-31	41
Joshua		16	73
14:6	41,43	17-18	47
		17:3	47
1 Samuel		17:17-24	41
2:27	41	18	30,33
9	38,39,40	18:13	47
9-10	98	19:2	47
9:1-10:16	107,120	20:28	41
9:1-11:15	107	20:34	74
9:6	38,39	21	31,47
9:6-10	41	21:19	67
9:7	38	22	79,81-82
9:8	38	22:1-38	116,124
9:9	38,39		
9:10	38	2 Kings	
9:11	38	1:9	47
9:14	38	1:9-10	108
9:15-17	38,98	1:9-13	41

# Index of Biblical Passages

1:12	49	31:3-4	29
2:3	48	37:2	59
2:5	48	38:1	59
2:19	47-48	39:3	59
2:23-25	49		
3	108	Jeremiah	
4:1-7	42,48	1	79,86
4:1-13:19	41	1:9	86
4:8-37	31,48	1:11-13	78
4:9	42	1:18-19	78
4:38-41	48	4:1-4	94
4:42-44	41,48	9:6-8	93
5:1-27	48	15:17-18	32-33
6:1-7	48	20:6	57
9	30	20:9	87,96
9:1 ff.	42	21:11-23:8	84
13:14-19	42,48	23:9	29,105
17:13	53	28	68
		28:11	90
Isaiah		29:24-27	30
1:1	86	35:4	41
1:23	92	38	96
2:1	86		
3:1-3	59,111	Ezekiel	
3:1-5	67	1:1-3:15	79
3:2	59,60	3:8-9	78
3:2-3	60	4:1-3	31
6	79,82,86	16:3	93
6-9	96	20	118
7	31	20:25-26	93
8:16	11,67,96	27:17	92
9:7-20	59		
9:13-14	59-60	Hosea	
13:1	86	3:1	72
13:7-8	29	4:5	62
19:8-9	92	4:19	72
28	109	6:5	62,79,86
28:7	59,60	8:4	84
28:15	54	9:6	72
29:10	54-55,59	9:7	30
30	38	9:7-8	62
30:9-10	55-56	10:1	72
30:10	52,54,55,56	11:8-9	90

# The Roles of Israel's Prophets

12:11	62	3:8	109
12:14	62	3:9-12	58-59
13:10-11	84	3:11	58
		6:1-8	94
Amos			
1:1	86	Habakkuk	
2:6-16	61,93	1:1	86
2:11-12	60,61,62		
3:3-6,8	61	Zephaniah	
3:6-16	61	2:3	94
3:7-8	60-61		
3:8b	87	Haggai	
4:6-10	67	1:2-6	67
5:11-12	68	2:16-17	67
5:14	67		
5:14-15	94	Zechariah	
7-8	77	5:1-4	32
7:2-3	94	5:5-10	32
7:7-8	77-78,122		
7:10-17	31,56-58,60,	Psalms	
	77,110	68:16	108
7:12	52,56	90:1	41
7:12-15	56		
7:12-17	110,124	Job	
7:15	21	1:16	108
7:16	61		
8:1	78	1 Chronicles	
8:5	92	9:22	40
9:11-12	94	9:29	53
		12:15	53
Obadiah	93	23:14	41
		26:28	40
Micah		29:29	40,52
1:5a	68		
2:2	92	2 Chronicles	
2:9-12	111	2:10	114
3:1	86	8:14	41
3:5	54,58	11:2	41
3:5-8	53-54	16:7	40
3:6	58	16:10	40
3:6a	109	25:7-9	41
3:6-7	54	29:30	53
3:7	52	30:16	41

## Index of Biblical Passages

33:18 52

Nehemiah

10:3 39

12:24 41

12:36 41

Ezra

3:2 41